

Settlers response to PM-Arafat meeting: We'll build more

Hebron Jews launch campaign against withdrawal

THE Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza has responded to the Netanyahu-Arafat meeting by deciding to embark on a major building campaign — legally if possible, but illegally if not.

Council members declined to say where or how much they planned to build. However, council spokeswoman Aliza Herbst said they hoped to have bulldozers in action soon.

"We've waited 100 days, with a lot of frustration, in order not to do something the government wasn't comfortable with," she said. "But we've come to the end of our patience."

Herbst said the council planned to start in places where there are already fully-approved building plans. These plans, which she said encompass "hundreds" of units, were frozen by the previous government, but could theoretically go ahead now that the cabinet has revoked the freeze — though the government still has the legal power to put a stop to them at any stage.

Originally, Herbst said, the council had decided not to build these units without the government's explicit approval. However, in the words of an official press statement, the council was "shocked" by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's decision to meet Yasser Arafat, "while his promises to his constituents [such as building in the territories] remain unfulfilled." At an emergency meeting held late Wednesday night, it therefore decided it could wait no longer for the government's okay.

Ma'aleh Adumim Mayor Benny Kashriel, the deputy

council chairman, said the council has requested an urgent meeting with Netanyahu, as it still hopes an agreement can be reached.

"But if not, we'll build illegally," he said. If a decision were made to act illegally, he said, the first step would be to bring in squatters to live in existing empty apartments in the territories, which the government agreed in principle to sell, but so far has not.

The council also sent a circular entitled "One Hundred Days of Disappointment" to yesterday's meeting of the Likud central committee, which detailed both Netanyahu's broken promises regarding building in the territories and Palestinian violations of the Oslo Accords, which Netanyahu promised to force Arafat to rectify, but has so far ignored. Elkana Local Council head Nissim Stomianski said this was the first move in a public campaign "to pressure the prime minister to do what he says he wants to do, but for some reason isn't doing."

Meanwhile, the Jewish community of Hebron launched its own public campaign yesterday, with a Jerusalem press conference at which it screened a video depicting the dangers of a withdrawal from the city.

Brig-Gen. (res.) Aharon Levran, a former senior intelligence official who now chairs the Forum for Security and National Strength — an organization of some 400 high-ranking former officers who oppose the Oslo Accords in their current form — explained the forum's reasons for opposing

a withdrawal. First, he noted, Hebron is unique because it is the only mixed Jewish-Arab city in the territories, because it had an unbroken Jewish presence until the 1929 massacre, and because of its deep religious and historical significance, and therefore cannot be treated like Kalkilya or Tulkarim. He said the transfer of authority for civilian services such as water and electricity to the Palestinian Authority, which was fine in other cities, "would be a death sentence for the Jewish community in Hebron."

"This is not even to mention the ideological issue: That Jews should not be under Arab rule in Israel," he added.

Secondly, he said, there is a real security problem: The Jewish community is in a valley, and there is no way the army could protect it if the PA is given control of the surrounding hills.

"Finally, agreements should not be honored under any condition and at any price," he added, saying it would be absurd if, for instance, Winston Churchill had had to honor Neville Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler.

"What we demand of the government, and especially of the prime minister, is that it fulfill its promise not to put the security of Jews anywhere in Israel in the hands of a foreign power," concluded community spokesman Noam Arnon. "The government has no mandate to withdraw from Hebron."

While the government did promise to recognize facts on the ground, "no such facts have yet been created in Hebron," he added.

Christopher pushes for regular PM-Arafat talks

LONDON (Reuters) — US Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday urged Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to hold more talks.

Christopher said Wednesday's first meeting between Arafat and Netanyahu was "very significant."

"It crossed a psychological threshold that is essential if there is going to be meaningful progress," Christopher told reporters. "It's a first step that paves the way for the two parties to understand each other's problems and to begin to work together to resolve those problems."

Christopher was speaking in London at the start of a European tour, mainly focusing on Iraq, that will also take him to Israel next Sunday, when he is due to meet Foreign Minister David Levy.

Christopher said Netanyahu had committed himself to carrying out

agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

"But in order to do so, he will need to have regular consultations between himself, and his ministers and assistants, with Chairman Arafat and Chairman Arafat's aides," Christopher said.

The meeting had given a "new sense of momentum" to relations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Christopher said on Wednesday that Washington had played a key role in setting up the meeting between Netanyahu and Arafat.

The meeting marked formal acceptance by Netanyahu of Arafat as a negotiating partner, three years after the Palestinian leader sealed a peace agreement with Yitzhak Rabin.

Christopher said that when he met Netanyahu soon after his election, "I encouraged him to begin planning at that time to meet with Chairman Arafat, and this is the culmination of it."

Levy warns EU not to send delegation to Orient House

DUBLIN (Reuters) Foreign Minister David Levy yesterday warned Ireland, the current EU president, not to send an EU delegation to visit Orient House, the PLO headquarters in eastern Jerusalem.

Levy said before talks with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring that his government would welcome a fact-finding mission by an EU troika to Israel, but object if it tried to hold talks with the PLO at Orient House in disputed eastern Jerusalem.

A similar visit by Spring during a Middle East visit in 1995 caused a diplomatic row between Israel and Ireland and the cancellation of talks between Spring and President Ezer Weizman.

Levy, the first Israeli minister to visit Ireland, was speaking to

reporters during a five-nation European tour.

Levy said Palestine Authority Chairman President Yasser Arafat accepted that the political institutions of the Palestinian Authority were not in eastern Jerusalem.

"We want to see the troika but...we have reached an agreement that the political institutions of the Palestinians are no longer to be located in Jerusalem," Levy said.

"We are asking the troika to respect that agreement between Israel and the Palestinians," Levy said. "Why would they not respect it?"

Spring has not made clear whether the troika will try to visit Orient House on its visit, a date for which has yet to be fixed.

Peres: Netanyahu would agree to Palestinian state

IF the pressure on him were intense enough, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu would agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state, as he agreed to a meeting with Yasser Arafat, Labor Party leader Shimon Peres said yesterday on Israel Radio.

Peres said he is happy there no longer is a nationalist bloc, and expressed the hope that perhaps the schism in Israeli society would end. "The first thing that happened is that the Likud recognized the PLO and the head of the PLO, and don't let them tell you any stories," Peres said. "The [concept of] 'Greater Israel' is over. It doesn't exist anymore. The prime minister said that negotiations must be held on the delimitation of authority, and the delimitation of the territory. That means that there will be areas that will not be ours, and authority that won't be ours."

Netanyahu's media adviser Shai Bazak said that the path Peres had followed in the peace process with the Palestinians had led to a collapse of security for Israelis, at the cost of hundreds of terror victims.

Meanwhile, Labor Party Secretary-General Nissim Zivili said that he would recommend to the party's institutions that they support Netanyahu if a no-confidence motion is presented against him following his meeting with Arafat. (Tm)

B'tselem: Police use violence to keep out illegal Palestinian workers

JON IMMANUEL and news agencies

PALESTINIANS without permits "are being deterred from entering Israel by use of violence and degradation," claims B'tselem, the human rights organization, in a report issued yesterday.

The report presents 11 cases in June and July based on testimony of the victims and eyewitnesses. "In almost all the cases the Palestinian victims entered Israel, were beaten and then returned to the occupied territories," the report said.

B'tselem said the reports of abuse coincided with the change of government. Most of those who entered were seeking work during the closure, it said in the 26-page report.

Laborer Ishak Sabba said police broke his leg at a construction site where he had found work illegally. Ibrahim Salah, 17, said that he was taken from his father's home in Jerusalem on June 23 by security officers and beaten badly in the face, head and neck. Salah, who said he lost his hearing in one ear, claimed one officer promised to shoot him if he ever returned to Jerusalem.

B'tselem said the Justice Ministry's department for the investigation of police officers and other official bodies had not yet informed it of the results of any investigation into the allegations.

Winning numbers and cards

In yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the King of spades, the Jack of hearts, the Jack of diamonds, and the seven of clubs.

In last night's weekly Paysis Hazak drawing, the holder of ticket number 557783 won NIS 1 million, while ticket number 332984 was good for a car.

Those holding tickets 430838, 553328, 350807, 169876, 441795, 286837, 204900, and 434135 all won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 66457, 35950, 84792, 05678, 66056, 19072, 14514, 40257, 99818, 93498, 43077, 55798, 72846, 10035, 82394, 19545, 83640, 46258, and 45566 all were good for NIS 1,000, while those ending in 110, 487, 342, or 112 were good for NIS 100.

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Arafat upbeat over Erez summit

News agencies

ROME — Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat said yesterday that his landmark meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu was positive but that the issue of Jerusalem would either make or break the Middle East peace.

"This was a positive meeting that we hope will reinforce the process of peace between Arabs and Israelis and peace in the whole region," Arafat said in a speech to Rome community leaders, including Jews. "I hope that the meeting is a breakthrough and will put into effect what has already been agreed," Arafat later told reporters, after talks with Italian

Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini.

In his speech at Rome's city hall, Arafat took a firm stand on Jerusalem, saying the issue of its status "could either make the peace process fall or become a symbol of co-existence and harmony between Moslems, Christians and Jews."

"To insist on saying that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel is a fact that is contrary to truth and reality, besides being a violation of a (United Nations) resolution and international law."

"We want Jerusalem to be an open city, capital of two people, the Palestinian people and the Israeli people," he said.

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Health Ministry, Treasury try to head off nurses' strike

HEALTH Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and Finance Minister Dan Meridor met yesterday to discuss Sunday's threatened hospital nurses' strike. No details were released, except that their respective directors-general are "dealing with" the problem, and hope to prevent the strike.

The hospital nurses' union, which is demanding an increase in job slots to cope with the growing number of patients, said that the strike is still on.

"It's difficult for us to understand the Treasury," said union head Dana Cohen. "It hasn't shown any understanding of this serious

JUDY SIEGEL

situation. We have reached the threshold of a crisis and we can't serve our patients."

Cohen explained that departments meant to accommodate 30 patients have 45. Dialysis units that are supposed to serve 50 patients are treating twice or three times as many.

The union has been warning the Health and Finance ministries about the "deteriorating condition," she said, but they have done nothing. The nurses are currently working according to a

job-slot arrangement set in 1982-83.

If the strike is not headed off, it will affect all the country's public hospitals.

All outpatient clinics, day hospitals, diagnostic institutes, and other ambulatory services will be shut down. Operating rooms will work on a reduced duty roster. Nurses in wards, emergency rooms, and intensive care units will observe a reduced night schedule. Fertility units, and obstetrics, neonatal, oncology, and dialysis departments will function on a reduced schedule.

Capital municipality failed to supervise transport of Arab pupils

BILL HUTMAN

wrongdoing. Police recently recommended to the District Attorney's Office that charges be filed against them, police sources said.

Municipal sources said the companies were forbidden from bidding on this year's tender to transport Arab pupils. Ram-Shen is fighting the decision in court, claiming it met all the city's conditions.

The comptroller's office was particularly incensed because, as in the Jewish sector, many of the Arab pupils that received city-funded transportation are handicapped or mentally disturbed, municipal sources said.

In at least one case, private detectives hired by the comptroller's office to carry out surveillance on the school buses were discovered by a bus driver, who attacked them, according to the sources.

During one surveillance carried out in January, the detectives watched as some 40 pupils were crammed into a mini-bus fit for no more than 20, and taken to a

school in Beit Safafa.

The company involved was being paid to operate five mini-buses, according to the sources. The company also reported to the Municipality that it was taking more than 100 children to the Beit Safafa school.

The comptroller's office discovered that there was no on-site supervision of school transportation in eastern Jerusalem, and the municipality instead relied on reports by phone, and sometimes in writing, from the companies.

This negligence has apparently existed for years, with action to deal with the situation only beginning to be taken now, according to the sources.

The city spokesman said that "in light of the comptroller's findings, an in depth review is being carried out. It should be pointed out that in the Jerusalem area, there are only a very few transportation companies, which makes the municipality's ability to maneuver difficult."

"The city's education department intends to increase its supervision ... of the transportation of pupils to and from school."

Man sentenced to life for brutal double murder

RAINE MARCUS

A RISHON LEZION resident who shot a woman and her grandson before beheading them was sentenced to two consecutive life terms by the Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

Oleg Ya'acovov, 31, was convicted of murdering 67-year old Sofia Moshiev and her grandson, Sibelei, 21, in May 1995, on the orders of unknown underworld figures in Russia. Sofia Moshiev's son is known to be a member of the "Russian mafia," and on his arrival here to identify the bodies and testify, he admitted that the murders were related to his activities in Russia.

Ya'acovov, who was acquainted with both his victims, entered the pair's Ramat Aviv apartment, when only Sofia was at home. He shot her and hid her body in a wardrobe. Then he waited for Sibelei, a student, to arrive home.

Sibelei opened the wardrobe and discovered his grandmother's body. A fight erupted between the two and Ya'acovov shot Sibelei in the head as he tried to escape from the apartment.

Ya'acovov then beheaded the pair in the bathroom, using a kitchen knife. He later told police he had thrown the heads in a garbage can. The heads were never found.

Amal, Hizbullah set to run on joint list in south Lebanon elections after all

DAVID RUDGE

THE Amal Shi'ite movement and its rival Hizbullah are poised to run together in the Lebanese parliamentary elections in south Lebanon after all, following last-minute intervention by Syria.

Lebanese newspapers and Hizbullah's own radio station reported yesterday that an agreement on the matter had been reached.

The announcement followed a "pilgrimage" to Damascus on Wednesday by Hizbullah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah and Amal head Nabih Berri, apparently to receive instructions from Syrian President Hafez Assad.

Hizbullah, according to the reports from Lebanon, will get three seats on the joint list and will also be able to choose two other candidates - one from the Marjayoun area inside the security zone and the other Mustafa Sa'ad, the Sunni Moslem strongman of Sidon.

Amal had originally wanted to give Hizbullah only two seats on the list, but this was rejected by Hizbullah. Amal's list also includes the sister of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, himself an opponent of Hizbullah and of his Sunni rival Sa'ad in Sidon.

The announcement of the agreement, following weeks of bitter vitriolic rhetoric between Amal and Hizbullah, has upset supporters of both sides.

Radio stations reported that Amal had accused Berri of "selling out," while Hizbullah was

reported to be dissatisfied with other candidates, especially Hariri's sister, on the proposed joint list.

Nevertheless, Hizbullah stands to gain most from the deal which also, reportedly, includes a guarantee of winning five more seats in the Beka'a Valley round of the elections in a week's time.

This would give Hizbullah at least eight seats in the 128-seat Lebanese parliament - the same as it won in the 1992 elections - after it failed to retain its two seats in Mount Lebanon and Beirut in the earlier rounds of the general elections.

The elections in south Lebanon, the fourth round of the five-stage nationwide ballot, are set to be held on Sunday and followed by the final round in the Beka'a Valley the following week.

Senior police officer convicted of obstructing justice

RAINE MARCUS

FORMER Southern District deputy police chief, Cmdr. Danny Tabib, was convicted in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday of obstructing justice and breach of trust.

The charges arose from an accident that occurred three years ago while Tabib's girlfriend was driving a police car, which is illegal. The two had been driving in Tabib's official car on the Ashdod/Tel Aviv highway when the woman collided with a Public Works Department trailer. Only the two vehicles were damaged, and no one was injured.

However, since Tabib's friend

was not allowed to drive a police vehicle, when police were called to the scene, he told them that he had been driving. He was later charged with obstructing justice and breach of trust.

The prosecution said he even lied in court, arguing that he had gotten out of the car on the passenger's side because the driver's door was jammed.

One charge of attempting to suborn witnesses was dropped because of a lack of evidence.

He was suspended immediately after he was indicted, but is still the chairman of the International Police Federation. Judge Edna Beckestein postponed sentencing until mid-October.

Dismissed principal allowed to remain at work

TEL AVIV Labor Court yesterday extended for a month an injunction allowing a religious school principal to remain in her post despite her dismissal by the Education Ministry on grounds of "immorality."

The principal had been dismissed a week before the school year began, after her husband, from whom she is in the process of getting divorced, told education officials that she was having an affair. The principal, who is being backed by the parents at the Sharon region elementary school where she works, said yesterday she was sure the truth would come out.

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B'tselem: Police use violence to keep out illegal Palestinian workers

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No job for a caretaker

ACTING Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi was welcomed to the Justice Ministry yesterday with open arms. Senior ministry personnel, still smarting from former justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman's accusations of anti-religious bias, were delighted with Hanegbi's promise of unequivocal support.

This was a positive first step. A minister should support his professional staff in public under most circumstances; if he cannot in good conscience do so, the staffer in question should probably be fired.

However, it is to be hoped that the new minister will not confine himself to serving as a buffer for his people. There are many crucial issues which the Justice Ministry should be addressing, and it is a minister's job to provide leadership on such issues.

One of the most valuable contributions the new minister could make would be to devote serious attention to two major constitutional issues which are generating an increasing amount of controversy. One of these is religious-secular relations; the other is the issue of the balance of power between the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

The lack of a constitution has created a legal vacuum on both of these issues. Though the writing of a constitution was considered when the state was founded, it was thought that it would be too difficult to reach a consensus on church-state issues. For the past 48 years, all constitutional issues have therefore been resolved on an ad hoc basis.

In recent years, however, an increasingly activist High Court of Justice has been moving to fill this legal vacuum—not only on religious issues, but in virtually every other area of life as well.

A classic example was the court's 1993 decision to force then-prime minister Yitzhak Rabin to fire Aryeh Deri as interior minister because of the indictment against him. Nowhere does the law state that someone under indictment cannot be a minister. However, the court ruled that Deri's continued tenure would undermine faith in the government and the rule of law, and was therefore so unreasonable as to warrant judicial intervention.

The requirement that a governmental decision be not only legal—in the sense of not violating any specific law—but also reasonable, has increasingly led to the court being, as it was in the Deri case, the moral arbiter of society. In a similar case that same year, for instance, the court ruled that former General Security Service officer Yossi Ginosar was unfit to serve as director-general of the Housing Ministry, because of his involvement in both the Bus 300 affair and in obtaining a false confession of espionage from Circassian IDF officer Izat Nafsu.

The public's enormous faith in and respect for the court, as consistently reflected in opinion polls, show that so far, the court's moral judgments have been in tune with those of a majority of the Israeli public. Most Israelis are eager for the moral vacuum in the country to be filled. As one British jurist said after the Deri decision, no British court would have touched such a case—but on the other hand, no British minister

would have considered not resigning under similar circumstances.

However, the court's doctrine of "reasonableness" has also led to increasing tensions with both the religious minority and the other branches of government.

Rehov Bar-Ilan, for instance, is a textbook case of an issue that would never have been dealt with by a court following a policy of judicial restraint. The law gives the Supervisor of Traffic the authority to close major arteries on Shabbat, and the supervisor decided to do so. However, the court decided his decision was unreasonable, and therefore issued an injunction against the closure.

The uproar this decision aroused in the religious community resulted precisely because it was not a straight issue of law, but an issue of reasonableness—which is, of course, essentially a value judgment. To the religious, the decision to close Bar-Ilan was reasonable.

Similarly, the reasonableness doctrine has permitted an increasing encroachment by the court on the powers of the executive and the legislature. By law, for instance, the prime minister has complete discretion as to whether to fire a minister—yet the court ruled that Rabin must fire Deri. Similarly, by law the Knesset has complete authority to lift or refuse to lift an MK's parliamentary immunity—yet in 1993, in a 3-2 decision, the court ruled that the Knesset vote on lifting Shas MK Raphael Pinhasi's immunity was improper, and ordered a revote. This ruling infuriated most of the Knesset, and led to numerous threats to restrain the court's powers. Similar rumblings were heard in 1995 when the court agreed to bear a petition against a Labor-Shas coalition agreement, though it eventually ruled, 3-2, that the agreement was not justiciable. (It should be noted that current Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, who dissented, wanted to annul the agreement.)

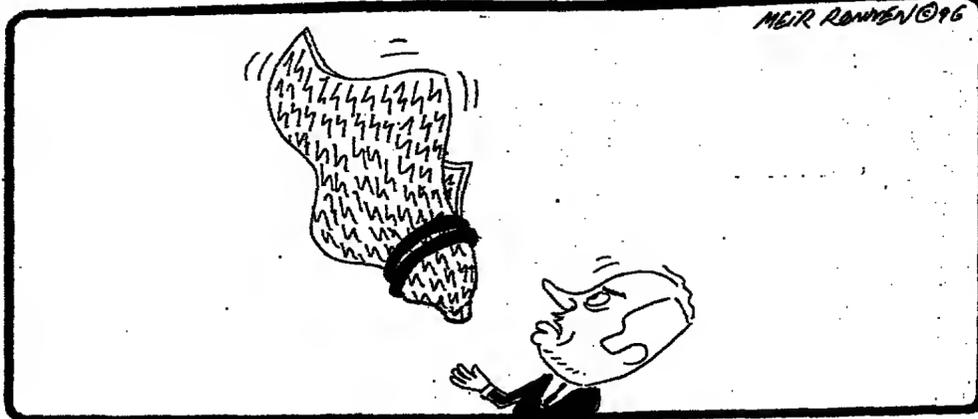
Despite the recent ugliness over Rehov Bar-Ilan, neither the church-state issue nor the balance-of-powers issue has yet generated an explosion. However, opportunities for friction have increased on both fronts, as a natural consequence of the court's expanded sphere of activity. And as tensions increase, the old ad hoc system of conflict resolution is becoming increasingly inadequate.

Developing a clear set of legal guidelines to govern both the division of power between the three branches of government and the resolution of church-state conflicts is clearly no simple task. It cannot be accomplished this week, or probably even this year. For precisely this reason, it is incumbent on the Justice Ministry to start working on the problem now, before the sparks ignite a fire.

Unfortunately, there is no indication that either Hanegbi or anyone else in the government has given any thought to this issue. Indeed, Hanegbi appears to have been appointed mainly as a caretaker, whose assignment is to do as little as possible and make no waves.

If Hanegbi is not interested in or capable of tackling this issue, the government should appoint someone who is. The mark of a good government is the ability to look beyond tomorrow, and plan for the long-term welfare of the country.

'Bibi, it's me, Yitzhak. Catch.'



Let's have progress, not PR

CHAIM HERZOG

THERE is a malaise in the air regarding the direction in which the government is moving.

It came to power promising peace with security. The long-awaited handshake between the prime minister and Yasser Arafat notwithstanding, one cannot escape the growing feeling that the government is not exactly meeting its commitments.

The apparent absence of a clear-cut policy could well lead to a gradual deterioration, both politically and security-wise. As far as the peace process is concerned, it does not seem at the moment to be at all obvious in what direction things will eventually move.

If at times it was felt that the previous government was moving too rapidly with the peace process—and I indicated this from time to time in these pages—the present government seems to be moving in the opposite direction.

One cannot avoid the impression that the prime minister and his colleagues tend to engage in effective public relations in place of formulating a coherent policy.

In the development of relations with the Palestinians, we are witnessing inexplicable delays with regard to the interim agreement, with indications of what could be interpreted as a tendency to denigrate the Palestinians. And while the government does not accept the basic premise on which the Oslo accords were predicated, no clear alternative has been produced.

A continued freeze at the current stage of the interim agreements

could certainly have an adverse effect on our relations with the Palestinians, and could well damage the fragile basis which has already been constructed. It could, furthermore, have an undesirable effect on our relationship with the Arab world in general.

create the impression of an advance on the Syrian track by means of the "Lebanon first" idea. This could be a smart tactic, but one should not be blind to the true realities.

There is no hope that the Syrians will adopt this idea as

I see no problem in slowing down the process with the Syrians if there is real progress with the Palestinians

One should not forget that the Palestinian problem has always been at the heart of the Israeli-Arab conflict; it cannot be bypassed.

For my part, I would tend to move immediately toward the final arrangement, in an effort to achieve an acceptable compromise between the ambitions of the two peoples, the political and security aspects of the problem and the opposing pressures on the ground.

I HAVE always been of the opinion that it is not necessary to move rapidly on negotiations with Syria. We have the right to demand that Syria first prove the reliability of its intentions and agree to move toward a long-term agreement that will protect and guarantee our security interests. The government is attempting to

long as they believe that Israel's government has no intention of meeting their demands with regard to the Golan Heights.

Thus I see no problem in slowing down the process with the Syrians, provided there is a meaningful advance with the Palestinians, and I believe that this approach will be understood in Washington, where Hafez Assad is not the most popular of figures.

However, a continued freeze and a feeling that there will be no advance on the two fronts together could threaten to destroy the structure of peace achieved so far. That would deprive us of the political, security, and economic benefits of the process, and could well unite the Arab world against us and affect our relations with the United States. Above all, it is important to

realize that the government's policy—or absence thereof—could exact a very heavy security price. On the Palestinian front, it could well be translated into unrest and terror; on the Syrian front it could develop into an escalation toward war. In my view, we are beginning to see signs of this already.

In this connection, I believe the IDF and the defense establishment are being pushed into an almost impossible situation.

On the one hand, the current demands on the security and defense services grow, while on the other it is essential that our military preparedness increases to meet Syria's threats of war. This, after recent years during which such readiness has been consciously reduced because of the opening windows of peace.

The defense establishment is expected to achieve and maintain the degree of security to which the government is committed. But one cannot escape the impression that it has become a less integral part of the political process than heretofore; it has been subjected to unbridled attacks in a manner which undermines its standing in the eyes of the public.

As we approach the High Holy Days, it behooves the government to engage in soul-searching. It must draw the necessary conclusions, both as to strengthening the peace process and regarding the enhancement of our security posture.

The writer was Israel's sixth president.

What Netanyahu must know, and tell

FRANK J. GAFFNEY

AS Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu prepares to visit Washington next week, his briefing books will almost certainly focus on such topical questions as the latest developments in Israel's efforts to arrive at a secure peace with the Palestinians, the ongoing confrontation with Iraq and the progress being made by the joint US-Israeli program to defend against ballistic missile attack.

All other things being equal, the prime minister may subsequently be unaware of an issue that will come to a head in the US Senate shortly after he makes his official rounds there—an issue that may prove every bit as portentous for the Jewish state as the items currently on his agenda.

Sometime before Rosh Hashana, the Senate is expected to consider approving US ratification of a highly controversial international arms control agreement known as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). This treaty aspires to rid the world of chemical weapons by banning the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

The convention faces strong opposition from such friends of Israel in the Senate as Majority Leader Trent Lott and Senators Jon Kyl and Al D'Amato because the CWC's flaws ensure that it will be utterly unable to achieve these ambitious objectives. In fact, the treaty may actually increase the danger of chemical warfare.

Not the least reason is that the Chemical Weapons Convention can come into effect even though a number of dangerous, chemical weapons states—notably Syria, Libya and Iraq—are not expected to become parties. Other chemical-armed nations, however, are signing on, knowing full well that

similarly sweeping pledges: "States parties shall... facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and scientific and technical information relating to the development and application of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under this Convention." Insofar as there is no appreciable difference between much of the "chemicals, equipment, scientific and technical information" that is used for purposes prohibited under the CWC and that used for peaceful purposes, Article XI translates into a commitment to transfer chemical weapons-relevant material and know-how to any nation that becomes a party to the treaty.

A treaty that aspires to rid the world of chemical weapons could actually increase the risk of chemical warfare

the unverifiability and unenforceability of this accord ensure that it will not jeopardize their continuing acquisition of deadly chemical weapons.

WORSE YET, the Chemical Weapons Convention actually ensures that such parties will be able to obtain the latest means of manufacturing chemical weapons from other state parties in the developed world.

Despite the dismal experience with the "Atoms for Peace" provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—according to which countries like Iraq, North Korea, Pakistan and India promised not to have nuclear weapons and were given access to all the technology and training they needed to do so—the CWC's Article XI makes the following,

Should the US ratify this treaty, it could find itself in the dangerous position of being obliged to assist a country like Iran, which has signed the treaty and is expected to ratify it, in improving its chemical warfare capabilities. For that matter, so could Israel if it becomes a party to the CWC. The Chemical Weapons

Convention, moreover, pledges states "not [to] maintain among themselves any restrictions, including those in any international agreements, incompatible with the obligations undertaken under this Convention, which would restrict or impede trade and the development and promotion of scientific and technological knowledge in the field of chemistry for industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical and other peaceful purposes."

The upshot of this commitment would be to make it vastly more difficult, if not impossible, for the US to thwart the transfer of chemical weapons-relevant technology to an Iran, either on the basis of unilateral action (for example, through a US trade embargo or legislation like that recently adopted at Sen. D'Amato's initiative) or multilaterally. Senators would benefit greatly from hearing Netanyahu's views on the wisdom of the US becoming associated with such a "Chemicals for Peace" program for Iran as seen by a country likely to discover the hard way that the use to which Teheran will quickly put such enhanced chemical capability is anything but peaceful.

The writer held senior positions in the Reagan Defense Department and is currently director of the Center for Security Policy in Washington.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INCREASED FINES

Sir,—The new minister of transport seems bent on punishing drivers in an attempt to alleviate the continuing escalation of deaths and serious injuries on our roads. Without considerably increased police presence and roadside electronic monitors, the chances of violators being apprehended are still slight.

Since trucks are one of the obvious problems, why has he not announced an immediate lowering of the speed limits for heavy vehicles specifying loaded and unloaded vehicles (80 km/h maximum unloaded, 70 km/h loaded as in most countries in Europe)?

Where are the punishments for owners of the companies who employ the overworked and underpaid truckers?

I don't think that one aggressive Israeli driver will lose any sleep over the new regulations, however draconian they may appear to be on paper.

ZELDA HARRIS, Spokesperson, Mefenu Netanya.

OUR CHILDREN'S BACKS

Sir,—I refer to Judy Sigel's article of August 29, "Doctors offer advice for new school year." I remember never having to carry heavy bags to and from school in England. Each child simply had a desk in class with a padlock with all his school books inside. One only needed to take home those books that were needed for homework.

Has the Ministry of Education considered such a solution to save our children's backs? BRIAN ZIETMAN, Jerusalem.

OUTDATED

Sir,—Last time the US attacked Iraq (1991), our government instructed us to use gas masks that later were shown to be ineffective. The government also directed us to bundle in "sealed rooms" which were useless; they only served as a psychological crutch, at best.

What does our new government have to suggest now?

Former chief of staff Dan Shomron informed us on Kol Yisrael that no present preparations or action were needed on the homefront. Again, generals cling to outdated conceptions that have been proven to be wrong.

So, what else is new? STANLEY LEVIN, Petah Tikva.

ECUADORIAN ART

Sir,—In your issue of August 15, you mention the International Arts and Crafts Fair 1996, and illustrate the article with a beautiful picture which shows the artistic work of an Ecuadorian artisan, as an attraction for the Israeli public during the fair. The fact you published this information about Ecuadorian art proves the interest shown by the Israeli public in the artistic and original work of the traditional Ecuadorian arts and crafts.

I wish to thank you for the reference made to Ecuador on this occasion and assure you that my government and the embassy are encouraged to sponsor cultural exhibitions in Israel in view of the interest of Israelis in cultural expressions not only of Israeli art but also foreign art.

PAULINA GARCIA D. DE LARREA, Ambassador of Ecuador, Tel Aviv.

POT CALLING

THE KETTLE BLACK

Sir,—The Labor Party, defeated in the elections, is now engaged in sour-grapes lecturing of the new administration. For former P.M. Peres to declare that "the new P.M. has no mandate to ignore half the electorate," when his government was undeniably and overtly guilty of this, is the height of hypocrisy.

Labor MK Ehud Barak accusing the Likud administration of "a refusal of accept facts that do not jibe with ideology or dogma," is a classic example of the pot calling the kettle black. This was exactly the previous administration's modus operandi, where any and all incidents and actions which did not conform to Peres's idyllic vision of "the new Middle East" were ignored, or rationalized away, or completely reinterpreted to accommodate this starry-eyed illusion.

Peres's incredible statement that the alleged cancellation of the objectionable Palestine Covenant clauses was "the most historic development in 100 years," would be laughable were it not symptomatic of how desperate he was to sacrifice credibility and caution on the altar of "an agreement at any cost."

Moreover, the accusation that Likud "bought" haredi votes with ministries, when recent history revealed the blatant subversion of the political process with the Tsomet "rejection" receiving high cabinet posts and other perks, should have made Labor adherents reluctant to use such examples.

The Israeli electorate is to be commended for its good sense and perspicacity in engineering a change in the government. FAY DICKER, Brooklyn.

POSTSCRIPTS

TRIVIA QUESTION: When did Bolivia establish its first paved link with a neighboring country? (a) 1779 (b) 1921 (c) 1809 (d) this past July

Incredible as it may seem, there was no way to drive in and out of Bolivia until this summer, when a new road was inaugurated between La Paz and Chile.

The 193 km highway, which crosses the Andes and connects Bolivia with the seacoast, reduces the trip from La Paz to Arica, Chile, from 18 to 6 hours. The road rises to an altitude of 4,660 meters.

OVERCOME BY remorse for a vengeful epistle to his loved one,

a young man hid in the post office in Saint-Etienne, France, attempting to intercept the scathing missive he sent.

But the medical student couldn't outfox the office's sophisticated detection system. He hid in the main office until closing time and snuck into the mail sorting room. He searched in vain for the spleen-filled letter that faulted her for being insensitive.

Tipped off by a silent alarm, police caught him red-handed, his nose in the mailbags. He was charged with trespassing.

MOST CRIMINALS take pains to conceal their identities. One liquor store bandit, however, left

behind an ID card before fleeing on a bicycle.

The bandit entered the Apollo Liquor Store in Evansville, Indiana, indicated he wanted to buy a bottle of wine and presented his driver's license as identification, required in many Indiana liquor stores.

Then he demanded money, knocked the clerk down and took off with \$100—but leaving his license behind.

He was, as you can imagine, arrested.

Fan Ah-hoo, 80, took the elevator from her 14th floor apartment, setting off for her morning walk. She wasn't freed until 60

hours later, despite pressing the alarm, calling for help and banging the door with her walking stick.

"After the door closed, I heard a very loud noise from the engine, followed by some black smoke," she said.

"I simply waited and waited without thinking of anything. I did not even know the time because I do not wear a watch," she said. "It was suffocating inside."

It was the second time Mrs. Fan had been trapped, having spent an hour in a stopped elevator a few years ago. "I will not take the lift again on my own," she said.

Handwritten note: סוכה מן האשכול



The 'is' and the 'ought'

MARK A. HELLER

A FEW years ago, Canadians got involved in a passionate debate about whether or not the province of Quebec should be a "distinct entity."

That debate raged for several months, engaging the most intense emotions, before it finally petered out, not because any kind of agreement was reached, but because the protagonists eventually realized that they were arguing about a non-issue.

In most important respects, Quebec's existence as a "distinct entity" was a fact, and the real issue was not whether or not that fact should be, but rather what Quebec's relations with the rest of Canada should be. The issue, incidentally, has not yet been resolved.

Even in the minds of those who insist that "distinct" should find political expression in sovereignty, there is still a great deal of confusion and uncertainty about what sovereignty should mean in terms of questions like a common currency and a customs union.

Although the questions are very different and the stakes higher, there is at least one parallel with events in this part of the world.

In the next few months, Israel is almost certain to find themselves engaged, with the Palestinians and with themselves, in a similarly passionate but pointless debate about whether or not there should be something bearing the label "Palestinian state."

This will happen either because negotiations about permanent status will truly begin, or because Yasser Arafat, frustrated that they have not begun, will unilaterally declare the establishment of a Palestinian state.

In either case the debate will generate much fury, as it has so often done in the past. But this time it will be about a non-issue, because in many important respects, a Palestinian state already exists.

At the end of the 20th century, many of the conventional categories of international relations have become blurred and indistinct. In an era of free-trade areas, regional institutions, transnational

corporations and international conventions that constrain the unilateral exercise of power even within borders, the meaning of terms like "independence" and "sovereignty" are no longer self-evident, if, indeed, they ever were. But many of the symbols, manifestations, and perquisites of statehood are already enjoyed by the Palestinians.

In many important respects a Palestinian state already exists

It is true that the PLO's observer status at the UN has not yet been converted into membership in the General Assembly. And the Palestinians will probably hold out for a separate international telephone code, even if countries such as Canada, Slovakia, and Kazakhstan somehow manage to do without. But they already have a flag, an anthem, an airline, radio and TV stations, postage stamps, security services, prisons, lots of uniforms and limousines, even an Olympic team.

More significantly, they have a government headed by a coherent leadership that was legitimized by a relatively free and fair election and recognized by most of the world - including, since Wednesday's historic handshake - Benjamin Netanyahu. This government already exercises some measure of authority over some territory.

WHAT THE Palestinians do not yet have, however, are the psychological gratification of formal independence, the material gratification of a decent standard of living, and the real substance of statehood - recognized boundaries and regularized relations with their neighbors - and these are things no melodramatic declaration by the ra'is/chairman/president is going to provide.

And what Israel does not yet have is termination of the conflict based on regularized relations with its neighbors.

With respect to the Palestinians, this requires an agreement that secures Israel's interests by specifying - and limiting - the scope and territorial extent of Palestinian political authority, i.e. borders, security arrangements, and economic ties. With respect to the rest of the Arab world, it means normalization. And these are things no rhetoric about labels is going to provide.

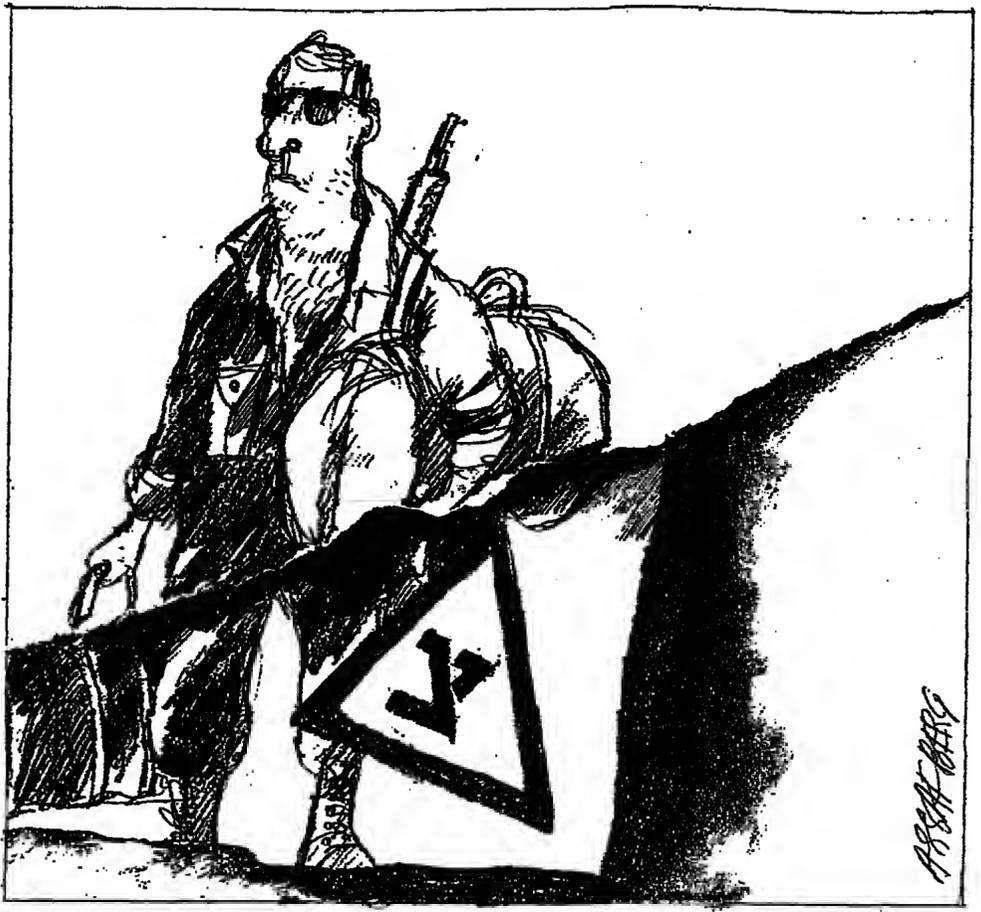
But rather than dealing with the essence of Palestinian-Israeli relations and pushing through to the finish line in the upcoming debate, Israelis of all persuasions are likely to remain stuck at the first hurdle, the one posed by the label.

The national camp will cling to its traditional position that there should not be a Palestinian state in any shape or form, though it already exists in some shape and form. And it will continue to argue this, as though the meaning of Palestinian statehood were self-evident, without any connection to its shape and form; and without really questioning whether the things the national camp aspires to achieve, like security or freedom for Jews to settle under Jewish rule anywhere in the Land of Israel, are really impossible with a Palestinian state, or possible without it.

And Labor, though it has come a long way since the days of Golda Meir, will probably still tie itself in knots trying to find a politically correct way to say "Palestinian state" (separation?) without really saying it.

It would be encouraging to think that the political system can come to grips with the real problems, but until we can separate the "is" from the "ought," a lot of emotion, energy, intellectual effort, political capital, and perhaps even blood will be spent in an anachronistic debate about a non-issue.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University.



Modern IDF with a tired face

WHEN Yigael Yadin asked David Ben-Gurion in 1949 whether he shouldn't order the army to prepare for a prospective Third World War, the old man retorted to the overly pessimistic chief of staff: "You - concentrate on the Arabs."

The 34-year-old Yadin set out to do just that. Obsessed with the young state's numerical inferiority, he established that uniquely Israeli institution: reserve duty.

Yadin's was a visionary project, one that ultimately allowed a country the size of New Jersey to create an army the size of Germany's, and a democracy devoid of natural resources to fight petrodollars with a secret weapon called civil volunteers.

The wars of 1967 and 1973 wouldn't have been won without a "people's army" that conscripted (almost) all its males for well over half their adult lives.

However, nearly half a century later it's time to reconsider the costs and benefits of Yadin's project.

The basic premise was pragmatic. To amass armies that would fight the entire Arab world Israel must stretch a soldier's age all the way up to 50 and have him serve anywhere between a month and two, year after year, even until he sees his own kids joining the army.

For decades this structure worked, but not any more. Two years ago, then premier Yitzhak Rabin was already saying in the Knesset that the number of young recruits volunteering to serve in the army was on the decline. In a recent expose, youngsters spoke openly of their draft-dodging.

At stake is not only ideology, but sociology too. Most combat-service volunteers now belong to three minorities: Religious Zionists, first-generation immigrants and second-generation non-Ashkenazim. The immigrant component of this slicing is openly admitted by the army, and the other two - which for understandable reasons are not officially monitored - are well known and visible across the IDF.

It follows that descendants of the veteran, secular Ashkenazi elite, those who led Israeli troops in our

major wars, comprise the majority of those who now prefer to serve their own interests rather than their country.

The relatively new arrivals to the IDF's officer corps are motivated by what concerns anyone who feels disenfranchised: acceptance. For two generations combat service was seen as proof of character and an engine for social mobility.

Conversely, many current service-

kind of service.

The new phenomenon of draft-dodging is clearly also a by-product of the twilight atmosphere that followed the signing of the Oslo accords, and of the army's refusal to absorb in their entirety the masses of new immigrants who arrived here from the late 1980s on.

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major wars, comprise the majority of those who now prefer to serve their own interests rather than their country.

Don't silence the haredim

YOSSI GOELL

THIS week close to a million households received picture postcards showing the backs of the heads of two young men, one bareheaded, the other wearing a religious-Zionist crocheted kippa. Superimposed on the heads was the familiar triangular logo of the army call-up notice - but with a play on words which replaced the usual "tzv giyus" (army call-up) with the message "tzv piyus" (call for rapprochement).

I hope that Avi Hai, the organization behind the postcard campaign, didn't pay too much for the creative gimmick - a gimmick partly in a good cause, but partly serving to divert public attention from the very serious deterioration of relations along the secular-religious divide.

The symbols used by Avi Hai do truly indicate the camps between which a rapprochement is badly needed, and is attainable. Avi Hai decided, correctly, not to include a picture of a haredi youth. I assume this was because it realized that no rapprochement is possible between the Zionist camps - secular and national religious - and the haredim.

The basic divisions between secular and religious Zionists have widened into chasms over the last two decades. The debate between the two camps, however, while often fiery, is basically a political and rational one. It has revolved primarily around the territories, settlements, and Israel's attitude to the Palestinians.

These issues are not about to disappear, but dramatic developments can be expected in the near future, and they will have profound effects on the debate. These developments could lead to deep anguish and a profound sense of despair within the national religious camp.

The pain of seeing its dream of a Greater Israel vanish could, however, be deflected in the direction of seeking rapprochement with the mainline secular Zionist camp for the purpose of jointly addressing the long-neglected problems of forging a modern, democratic and Jewish Israel.

Such rapprochement is not possible with the relatively small "post-Zionist" fringes of the secular camp, whose main aim seems to be to ape the most decadent aspects of what passes for current Western civilization. But the mainstreams of the secular and religious Zionist camps need each other very badly to resist their respective extremes.

NO SUCH rapprochement is possible with the major parts of the haredi camp - as the Zameret Committee, appointed to find an

Their relations with mainstream Israelis will have to get worse before they get better

acceptable compromise on the demands to close Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan on Shabbat, is about to find out.

The first candidate to head that body, whose establishment was recommended by the High Court of Justice, was former Supreme Court justice Menahem Elon, a leading religious judicial figure. He backed out when he realized how hopeless the prospect of compromise was. He was replaced by Zvi Zameret, who heads the Ben-Zvi Institute.

This week it was revealed that the records of his committee's predecessor, the Strum Committee, have been systematically destroyed. The reason? Some of the haredim who appeared before the committee demanded that all records of their testimony be wiped out. They feared that their conciliatory positions would become known to their more fanatical constituents.

At the same time, the country was made privy to the fulminations of the haredi press against the High Court and especially against its president, Justice Aharon Barak. Shocking as

these rantings were, on the principle of the importance of "knowing one's enemy" the attempt to silence them was wrong.

It is essential that the "whole country" be made aware of the dominant opinions of large parts of the haredi communities, including the comment by Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Haim Miller, who called Israel's flag "a rag."

The haredi world has ever made a secret of its loathing for Zionism and the Zionist state. Much more serious is the fact that, given half a chance, haredim make no bones about using their political power to suppress the lifestyles of those who are not haredi - whether secular, national religious, or even extremely devout Sephardim, whom the Ashkenazi haredim disdain.

The cases in which haredim, who are often vulnerable minorities themselves, turn into intolerant oppressors have become more numerous since the haredi parties succeeded in installing the Likud's Ehud Olmert as mayor of Jerusalem.

Luckily, the history of the past few decades also shows that when such haredi attempts are opposed by force - whether by the police or by irate citizens - they always back down.

Rapprochement between mainline secular and religious Israelis and the haredim is simply not in the cards at this stage. There is a potential for relations getting better, but sadly, only if they get worse first - bad enough to shake the leaders of all camps into hammering out the painful compromises that are essential for a viable coexistence between Jews whose lifestyles are so profoundly different.

The writer comments on public affairs.

AMOTZ ASA-EL

major wars, comprise the majority of those who now prefer to serve their own interests rather than their country.

The relatively new arrivals to the IDF's officer corps are motivated by what concerns anyone who feels disenfranchised: acceptance. For two generations combat service was seen as proof of character and an engine for social mobility.

Conversely, many current service-

kind of service.

The new phenomenon of draft-dodging is clearly also a by-product of the twilight atmosphere that followed the signing of the Oslo accords, and of the army's refusal to absorb in their entirety the masses of new immigrants who arrived here from the late 1980s on.

Oslo fostered the illusion that comprehensive peace was around the corner, and workplaces and

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish troops build up on Iraq border
SILOPI, Turkey (Reuters) - Turkey staged heavy military activity near its frontier with Iraq yesterday, but Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said a thrust across the porous border was not imminent.

Fighting rages between Kurdish factions
IRBIL, Iraq (AP) - Two rival Kurdish factions slugged it out yesterday near this strategic northern city as Iraqi troops and tanks and troops dug in nearby to keep a close watch on the conflict.

German FM apologizes to Poland
BONN (AP) - Germany's foreign minister apologized to Poland yesterday for the behavior of German hooligans, who gave the Hitler salute, displayed antisemitic banners and shouted anti-Polish slogans during a soccer match in the neighboring country.

Priebke lawyer calls for new ruling
ROME (Reuters) - Italy's highest court yesterday called for a constitutional ruling on whether former SS officer Erich Priebke was legitimately re-arrested after he was controversially freed by a war crimes trial in July.

French court set to rule on Papon case
BORDEAUX, France (AP) - A court will rule September 18 whether there is enough evidence to try former Vichy official Maurice Papon, who is accused of deporting hundreds of Jews to their deaths in Nazi Germany. The appeals court must decide whether 85-year-old Papon acted on his own or was just following orders. The ruling will mark significant progress in a sensitive case that has been stalled in the courts for nearly 15 years.

Fran swirls nearer South Carolina coast
CHARLESTON, S.C. (Reuters) - Hurricane Fran bore down on the South Carolina coast yesterday, forcing hundreds of thousands of residents to seek refuge inland and rekindling memories of the devastation of Hurricane Hugo.

Survivor of poison gas attack recounts ordeal in Asahara trial
TOKYO (AP) - Struggling to recount a nightmare morning, a Tokyo subway worker testified yesterday at the trial of cult guru Shoko Asahara that he saw two colleagues collapse and die minutes after breathing sarin nerve gas.

Asahara, whose followers in the Aum Shinri Kyo cult worshipped him as their guide to enlightenment, is accused of masterminding the March 20, 1995, sarin nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subways that killed 12 people and sickened thousands.

The 41-year-old guru looked indifferent to the testimony of deputy stationmaster Toshiaki Toyoda, the first of a long line of witnesses expected to appear at Asahara's murder trial.

With his eyes closed, Asahara sat motionless in a Tokyo courtroom between policemen, his hair and beard grown wild.

Toyoda said he was about to finish his overnight shift when urgent calls came in at 8:10 a.m. from nearby stations that subway passengers were collapsing.

He immediately ran upstairs to the platform. There, colleagues Kazumasa Takahashi and Tsuneco Hishinuma were wiping the platform with newspapers near a rectangular-shaped object that had been removed from the train and was leaking fluid.

An unusual odor struck Toyoda's nose. "It was something that I had never smelled before. I only recognized it as something ominous."

When the three workers finally put everything in a garbage bag, Takahashi and Hishinuma collapsed and were carried away on stretchers.

"[Takahashi's] eyes were open, so I tried talking to him," Toyoda said, his voice shaking. "But he wouldn't reply."

Toyoda himself collapsed soon after, and was hospitalized for more than a month, he told the court. Takahashi and Hishinuma died.

Since his trial began in late April, Asahara has refused to enter a plea on nearly 20 charges, including a dozen other murders as well as kidnappings and illegal drug production.

Burundi troops try to drive rebels from capital
BUJUMBURA, Burundi (AP) - Government troops engaged in sporadic gunfire with Hutu rebels yesterday, the third day of fighting since the Tutsi-dominated army tried to drive the guerrillas from the outskirts of the capital.

The military says 20 rebel fighters and three soldiers have been killed since Tuesday, when troops attacked rebels massing on the eastern edge of Bujumbura.

Area residents said it appeared the Hutu guerrillas were attempting to cut off access to the city, taking hill-top positions on Tuesday and firing mortars at an eastern suburb. It was not possible to obtain comment from the rebels.

After the army retaliated Wednesday by firing on rebel positions, the Hutus were reported to be withdrawing.

The fighting has raised doubts whether Tutsi military ruler Maj. Pierre Buyoya can establish a semblance of peace in Burundi.

Yeltsin: I need heart operation

BORIS Yeltsin, breaking months of silence on his health, said yesterday he would undergo heart surgery, probably at the end of the month in Moscow.

The 65-year-old Russian president, speaking slowly though with fleeting glimmers of his old sparkle, broke the news in a rare television interview. But he left unclear just how serious his condition was following two heart attacks last year.

"I have undergone routine checks and during these checks they have found something wrong with my heart. Recommendations of doctors, our doctors, were for an operation or to work in a pas-

ALASTAIR MACDONALD
MOSCOW

sive way," he told the little-known RIA television agency.

"Passive work has never suited me. Nor can it suit me now. That's why an operation and full recovery, as they promise, is better for me than passive activity, passive work."

Yeltsin's remarks ended more than two months of embarrassed equivocation by aides who have insisted his absence since late June was due only to the fatigue of his re-election campaign.

It was also another step in dismantling Soviet-era taboos on the

health of Kremlin leaders. "I want to have a society based on truth here, that means no longer hiding what we used to hide," Yeltsin said in the interview, which was aired by all Russia's main networks.

But despite his assurance of a full recovery the lack of any detail left the world guessing whether Moscow's first democratic leader would be able to see out his new four-year term.

Russian stock prices fell sharply on news of the operation and investors sold European currencies for dollars on fears that political upset in Moscow would spill westward.

Yeltsin against quick Chechen pullout, but backs Lebed's peace

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin gave partial backing yesterday to a Chechnya peace plan agreed by his security tsar Alexander Lebed and the separatist rebels whom Russian forces have been trying to crush for 21 months.

He qualified his acceptance by saying Russia should not rush into withdrawing its troops.

"I have backed the latest plan of

action with the exception of one issue - the fast and prompt withdrawal of troops. I think we should not be in a hurry to do that," Yeltsin said in a television interview.

But Lebed was quoted by Itar-Tass news agency as saying after talks with Chechen chief-of-staff Aslan Maskhadov that the pullout would start on Sunday. It seemed

likely he was not aware of Yeltsin's comments.

Lebed's peace plan includes a compromise on the central issue - independence for the mainly Moslem North Caucasus region - by agreeing to put off a decision for five years. The accord, signed by Lebed and Maskhadov last Saturday, foresees the withdrawal of most of the troops.

Survivor of poison gas attack recounts ordeal in Asahara trial

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9:30-13:00 Ze'ev Ehrlich - Eretz Israel Studies: Book of Joshua (H)
11:15-12:30 Rabbi Reuven Aberman - Halachot of Cooking on Shabbat (H)
14:30-15:30 Rabbi Reuven Taragin - Kohelet, Iyov, Tehilim (E)
15:30-17:45 Rabbi Reuven Taragin - Methodology of Talmud Study (E)
9:00-12:00 Rabbi Elyahu Meid - 1 Kings: From the Division of the Monarchy to Ahab (H)
Wed. 14:30-18:00 Rabbi Zvi Bloshin - Halachot of the Moadim (E)
Thur. 9:30-11:45 Chana Gila Fox - Trends in Jewish Thought (H)
11:45-13:00 Rabbi Yair Dreyfus - Hasidic Thought (H)
9:30-12:45 Simi Peters - Methodology of the Mishnah (E)
20:00-22:30 Workshops in Hasidic Philosophy (E)
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Sun. & Tue. 9:30-13:00 Simi Peters - I Samuel (E)
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Public Health Services
Inoculations in Elementary Schools and Junior High Schools During the 1996/97 School Year
The Ministry of Health wishes to inform the parents of pupils that during the 1996/97 school year pupils in elementary and junior high schools will be inoculated according to the following program:
1st Grade - inoculation against measles, rubella (German measles), mumps, and polio.
3rd Grade - inoculation against diphtheria, tetanus
4th Grade - inoculation against rubella (boys and girls)
5th Grade - inoculation against rubella (boys and girls)
6th Grade - inoculation against rubella (boys and girls)
7th grade - test for tuberculosis
All grades - make up for missing inoculations, such as: measles, polio, diphtheria, tetanus.
Parents requesting that their children not be inoculated must inform the school principal in writing within 14 days of publication of this notice.
To parents of 1st grade children - if there is an individual in the family or in the household suffering from immune system disorders (due to disease or chemotherapy), the school nurse must be informed, so as to determine the type of inoculation to be given the child.
In the event of additional inoculations to be made during the course of the year, a separate announcement will follow.

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His brother: Orad Bar-Sadeh
His grandparents: Leib and Luffy Frank
Haim and Malka Bar-Sadeh
Aunts and uncles: Gil and Mavis Kaynan
Barbara Grancell-Frank
Yonatan and Sigal Bar-Sadeh
and all the cousins.
The funeral took place yesterday, Thursday, September 5. Shiva at the home of the parents in Tzur-Hadassa.

The shloshim in memory of our beloved
HANNAH WEINSTEIN ז"ל
will be held on Friday, September 6, 1996, at 10:30 a.m. at the Yarkon Cemetery. Please meet the family at the main gate.
Husband: Simle
Children: Miriam, Yigal, Eli and families

The tombstone consecration for
Prof. CHAIM RABIN ז"ל
will take place on Tuesday, September 10, 1996, at 4:30 p.m. at Har Hamenuhot Cemetery, Har Tamir.
The family

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סדרה מן הארץ

Hafez Assad: Still the sphinx of Damascus

There are three theories behind Syria's recent military moves, writes Gerald Steinberg

THE recent talk of crisis, and even war, with Syria show how little we still know about policies and objectives in Damascus. Missile tests, irregular movement of Syrian troops, and an increased US naval presence off the coast of Lebanon, created an atmosphere of tension and uncertainty.

Syria is still a very tightly controlled dictatorship, and the purpose of these actions is totally unclear. The decision making process is entirely in the hands (or head) of President Assad and he, as usual, is not talking.

In the absence of explanations or reliable information regarding Assad's intentions, analysts and government officials provided their own interpretations. Based on previous behavior and the background of the analysts themselves, three separate and competing theories have emerged.

First, there is the "misperception and misunderstanding theory." This explanation was developed by Americans following the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, and applied to the outbreak of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. This model explains international crises in terms of poor communication between political leaders, who interpret every move by other states as evidence of hostile intentions, and prepare to respond to the "worst case."

The Syrians, according to the theory, responded to what they saw as threatening Israeli actions and training exercises, the hawkish image of the new government, and the presence of Sharon and Eitan — the two major planners of the 1982 Lebanon War — in the cabinet.

This theory is supported by defensive postures assumed by the Syrian troops (moving from Beirut to the Bekaa Valley). In addition, statements by Syrian military leaders and editorials in the government-controlled press, which warned Israel against launching an attack, and called on Israeli leaders to "count to 100 and even 1000 before involving itself" in a military operation against Syria.

From Israel, the image was reversed. The Syrian troop movements, coupled with the verbal threats, and reports that Hizbollah has received longer-range Katyusha rockets, raised concerns about changes in the balance of power. Similarly, the tests of the Syrian Scud-C and the Israeli Arrow, although scheduled far in advance and independent of any other actions, contributed to the tensions.

The spiral of actions and reactions escalated, and what might have started as a simple misunderstanding, became a crisis.

On the other hand, it is also possible that Syria was itself preparing an attack or seeking to increase the level of tension, using the excuse of reports of an alleged Israeli military move. This is consistent with the view that Assad's actions are part of a deliberate strategy to destabilize the region and weaken the Netanyahu government.

According to this theory, Assad has realized that this government does not intend to continue the negotiations where Peres had left off, and expectations of a quick Israeli withdrawal from



all, or most, of the Golan Heights have been dashed.

This interpretation is supported by some academics and Labor Party politicians and MKs such as Hagai Merom. In public statements, Merom reported that Israeli military intelligence sources warned that a breakdown in the talks would lead to war. Merom headed the Knesset Committee on Defense and Foreign Relations until the elections, and he called for a special Knesset session to discuss this crisis.

The Golan Settlers' Committee and Likud MKs

accused Merom of contributing to Syrian psychological warfare and deliberately misleading the public for partisan political purposes.

If the primary Syrian objective is, indeed, to gain control of the Golan Heights, and if Assad is willing to risk a massive Israeli response (without hopes for resupply from a major power, as in 1967 and 1973), this scenario is credible. On the other hand, there is no clear evidence to support this theory, and it is inconsistent with Assad's indifference with respect to the negotiations over the Golan in the past four years.

Militarily, the Syrians know they are no match for Israel, and in a clash, Assad would probably lose much of the army that he depends on to maintain his regime and his control in Lebanon.

The third explanation focuses on Lebanon, and the seriousness with which the Assad regime takes Netanyahu's "Lebanon First" proposals.

Between 800,000 and 1.5 million Syrians (estimates vary, reflecting again the high degree of uncertainty) are employed in Lebanese recon-

struction. They provide a major source of jobs and foreign income for Syrian workers, (after oil sales and drug smuggling) and the social and economic stability of Syria is very dependent on these workers.

The Israeli attacks in Beirut and the rest of Lebanon during the "Grapes of Wrath" operation threatened to halt the building activity. There are no jobs for them in Syria, and if they are forced to return, this could cause major disruptions for the government.

A few weeks ago, Netanyahu warned that Hizbollah attacks in Southern Lebanon could escalate to involve Syrian bases. In a well-publicized tour of Israeli positions in South Lebanon, Netanyahu also noted that Israel would escalate in response to attacks, and reminded the Syrians that such an exchange would be painful to Damascus as well.

There is increasing evidence that Assad sees a challenge to Syria's role in Lebanon as the greatest threat to his regime and more important than Israeli withdrawal from the Golan. The Syrian leader's primary goal may be to consolidate his hold on Lebanon, while leaving the Golan as a political and military focal point for future generations.

Syria is attempting to use the current election process to solidify and legitimate its control in Lebanon, and the Israeli government's new policies introduced an element of uncertainty in this crucial period. Despite the formal rejection of the Israeli proposals to negotiate a settlement in Lebanon first, Assad has probably not decided how to respond, and may be primarily interested in avoiding a change in the status quo until after the Lebanese elections are finished in mid-September.

The warnings may be designed primarily to prevent unilateral Israeli actions that would upset Syrian plans during the election period, and the troop movements may be linked to Syrian interests in Lebanon, and not to Israel.

In the "Alice in Wonderland" politics of Syria, where nothing is what it seems, this public rejection may also be a sign of interest in discussing the future of Southern Lebanon, after the Lebanese elections. From this perspective, Netanyahu's policies constitute a major political change and challenge, but also an opportunity. If successful, Assad can gain international recognition of Syria's role in Lebanon, while also taking credit for pushing the Israeli army out.

The problem is that each of these explanations seems to make some sense, and there are other theories.

Despite five years of "direct negotiations" between Syrian and Israeli representatives, Syrian intentions and policies remain a mystery. Most of these negotiations are still conducted through American and other mediators, and Israeli and Syrian leaders still know very little about each other's perceptions, interests, and decision making processes.

The shuttle diplomacy conducted by the American government has allowed Assad to avoid direct discussions with Israel, and increased the misunderstanding and misperceptions.

As the current tension and various competing explanations have demonstrated, under these circumstances, the potential for misunderstanding, confusion and accidental conflict is still very high.

Anti-Defamation League 'spy suit' finally settled

TOM TUGEND
LOS ANGELES

THE Anti-Defamation League has reached a settlement in a federal civil lawsuit, initiated by a dozen ethnic organizations, which charged that the veteran Jewish defense agency

had illegally spied on them and their members.

The settlement, which is expected to be approved by a federal judge in Los Angeles, appears to finally put to rest a series of charges and legal entanglements that have kept ADL officials on edge for the better part of three-and-a-half years.

The class action suit was filed almost three years ago by Arab-American, African-American and Native American groups and individuals. They alleged that the ADL had hired intelligence agents with close police ties as part of a private national intelligence operation that kept tabs on thousands of Americans.

During the course of the suit, and an earlier probe by the San Francisco district attorney, ADL has consistently denied any improper or illegal actions, a position reiterated in the settlement.

ADL did agree, however, to pay \$175,000 toward the plaintiffs' legal fees, and to establish a \$25,000 community relations fund for programs to "facilitate improved relations between and among Arab-American, Jewish, African-American and other minority communities in the United States."

ADL's National Chairman

David H. Strassler and National Director Abraham H. Foxman notified their leadership, in a letter, that they had agreed to the following points in the settlement:

* A court injunction prohibiting ADL from obtaining any information from a government employee in California, when ADL knows, or should know, that the employee is precluded by law from giving such information to ADL.

* ADL and the plaintiffs will review and remove certain "confidential" files in its California and New York offices.

Peter A. Schey of the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law, representing the plaintiffs, said that a mutually agreed upon referee will oversee the process. Strassler and Foxman noted in their letter that "the settlement is

an appropriate way to put an end to what has been a particularly draining litigation."

Jerry Shapiro, ADL's regional director in Los Angeles, expressed his relief that the time and energy-consuming legal actions had been concluded and that he and his colleagues could concentrate fully on their "fact-finding and research in any lawful and constitutionally-protected manner."

Barbara Bergen, regional ADL director in San Francisco, noted that "the lawsuits gave us an opportunity to review our whole fact-finding methodology...To the extent that it required fine-tuning, we did that, but there has been no dramatic change."

A spokeswoman in New York said that there would be no additional comment from the national ADL office.

For the plaintiffs, Schey expressed his satisfaction with the settlement and said he hoped that his client organizations and the ADL would join in the future to fight hate groups and hate groups. He added that the settlement "is fair and addresses the important First Amendment issues of freedom of association and freedom of expression that were in the complaint."

Don Bustany, spokesman for the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, the lead party in the suit, said that despite ADL's "protestations of innocence...ADL engaged in illegal spying and hasn't really atoned for it."

(Natalie Weinstein of the Jewish Bulletin of Northern California contributed to this article).

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סדרה מן האוצר

Lawyer at the fringes

Controversial attorney Lynda Brayer has left her Judaism and Zionism behind as she takes up the Palestinian cause, Esther Hecht reports

MOST Israelis would rather not look in the mirror. Lynda Brayer holds up to them. No matter how they've seen themselves before, it reflects an image full of warts, often with horns, cloven feet and a tail. Many believe the mirror is warped. But Brayer is so certain it shows the truth she's determined to make them look at it again and again.

As executive legal director of the Society of St. Yves, the Jerusalem-based Catholic Human Resource Center for Human Rights, she has represented case after case of Palestinians against the state - fighting land expropriations, home demolitions and family separations.

She has also represented conscientious objectors, Christian volunteers seeking work permits and immigrants from the CIS whom the state has accused of lying about being Jewish.

Two weeks ago Brayer won a temporary stay of an eviction order against members of a Beduin tribe, the Jahalin, whom the state wants to move to make room for the expansion of Ma'aleh Adumim, a town across the Green Line, eight kilometers northeast of the capital.

Brayer's career as a lawyer began with family law, and she might have continued in that field - after all, "women like coming to women [lawyers] for divorce," she says with a laugh - if not for a series of what she calls "seminal" experiences. The first occurred in 1977, during her first month in law school at the Hebrew University, and pursued her throughout her studies.

"In a constitutional law course we were told that Israel's legal system is legal positivism. It means that whatever the legislature decides is law, is law. There were no standard-setting procedures which could limit parliament. There is an attempt to limit

it today, but then parliament was sovereign." The realization of the implications shocked her.

"I went dead cold," she recalls with characteristic drama.

Another thing she was told in law school was that legal arguments never include moral assertions. Brayer refuses to separate the two. One case referred to her by a colleague left her shaking with moral outrage and so pained she sobs as she recalls the details.

A Holocaust survivor who headed the kitchen of a government hospital was hauled before a disciplinary court for "stealing" unusable scraps of food.

Just as this case ended, the details of the No. 300 bus case [in which two terrorists captured alive were killed on orders of the General Security Service head] came to light.

It was then she lost faith "in the Zionist argument that the Jewish state was a place where Jews are safe. If this can be done, then no one is safe."

LESS CLEAR than the events leading to her political awakening were the stations on her path to Catholicism. Except for a brief adolescent fantasy of becoming a nun inspired by an Audrey Hepburn movie, her background and education - which she describes as "modern-Zionist Jewish" - held no hint of this future.

Her maternal great-grandfather, who hailed from Vitebsk, was among the founders of Petah Tikva. Her grandfather, who had studied at the Mikve Yisrael agricultural school, left Palestine in 1922 with his family and settled in an orange-growing area of South Africa.

Brayer, 51, was born in Johannesburg to a Zionist family with Revisionist leanings. She recalls that when MK Uzi Landau's father, Chaim, visited South Africa, he would stay with her aunt and

uncle. Her first nursery school was Hebrew-speaking and she went on to the King David day school. She even joined Betar, the Revisionist youth movement, for a year.

At 19, after dropping out of medical school, she came to Israel and started studying law at the Hebrew University. A year later she was married. In 1977, when her third child was still an infant, she decided to get a law degree. "It's just as well I didn't know it was impossible, or I mightn't have done it," she says with a laugh.

A couple of years later, through Christian friends, Brayer learned about European Christians who had come here to volunteer their services but couldn't get visas that would allow them to stay. She poured all her indignation into a letter to the Interior Ministry. To her surprise, it worked for one person, and then for another. Soon the word spread that she could help.

One request concerned visas for workers for the Bible Society, which distributes Old and New Testaments in a shop in downtown Jerusalem. Her letter challenged the Interior Ministry: "What do you want them to do, hire Jews? And then you'll accuse them of missionary activity?" The argument persuaded the ministry.

In 1986 she decided to enroll at the Hebrew University to study Christianity, but found the courses irrelevant to her. She borrowed books from Christian friends and "slowly it dawned on me that God is love - caritas - commitment."

She started attending services in a Greek Orthodox church, but it wasn't until she attended a low mass in a Catholic church, in 1987, that she had what she calls her "third seminal experience": "I watched the mass and thought, 'Do they know how Jewish this is?' The ritual hand washing, the prayers over the wine and the matza - then I understood how it



Lawyer-activist Lynda Brayer has represented countless Palestinian cases against the state.

replaces the Temple and the sacrifices." Nothing about it seemed foreign to her.

By the end of 1988 she was baptized. The intifada began December 7. It was then the two paths of her life converged.

A Christian friend introduced her to a young man from Dehaishe who was on his way to the military governor to seek a laissez-passer to study abroad. He returned 35 days later, with damaged kidneys and descriptions of what is recognized today as torture. "I had believed in a benign occupation. I didn't know we Jews were brutal," she says.

"I then understood that if you were Palestinian, everything was prohibited. You could only do what the authorities allowed. This was the opposite of freedom."

It was her "fourth seminal experience" and precipitated what she calls a slow nervous breakdown that lasted two years. "Everything I had believed and valued turned out to be a lie."

In May 1990 - between Friday evening mass and Friday night dinner at home - it occurred to her to demand that the church set up a legal-aid service. "My idea was to

take my profession and make it a service to the poor and oppressed," she says.

She returned to South Africa to consult with human rights organizations, "run mostly by Jews," that had fought apartheid.

The St. Yves Society, named for the patron saint of lawyers and the advocate of the poor, is funded by Catholic organizations and private donations. Today it has an office in the Notre Dame compound, behind Jerusalem's City Hall, and - because of the closure - an office in Bethlehem. According to Brayer, it is the only legal aid society for Palestinians, and the staff includes Christians, Moslems and even Orthodox Jews. She attends morning prayers and evening mass at Notre Dame, and is often in her office until late at night, answering the incessant phone calls and preparing briefs.

Peppering her stories with Yiddish phrases, sometimes lapsing into Hebrew, she chats easily about her children - who she says have come to terms with her conversion - and her grandchildren.

Just as easily, this full-bodied woman with a gold crucifix around her neck drifts into harsh

political assessments, all the while using the first person plural. "I think collective responsibility is a terrible idea, but I can't get it out of me," she says.

"One of the most tragic things in our political ideological system that we have to deny our own human responses. So you don't cry when you see a family hauled up. You con yourself by saying these are terrorists getting their just deserts. What does that mean for a society?"

BRAYER, like some radical bishops, equates Zionism with colonialism and sees parallels between it and South Africa. She looks to Africa as a model for a solid secular democratic state. "But first has to be - as happened in Africa - a truth commission to what has really happened - and as we say 'we're sorry'."

It is no surprise that Brayer has right-wing critics. But she and her Israeli colleagues who share her empathy with the Palestinians see her Zionism as counterproductive. "It makes people defensive. What just focuses on the injustices? It's one.

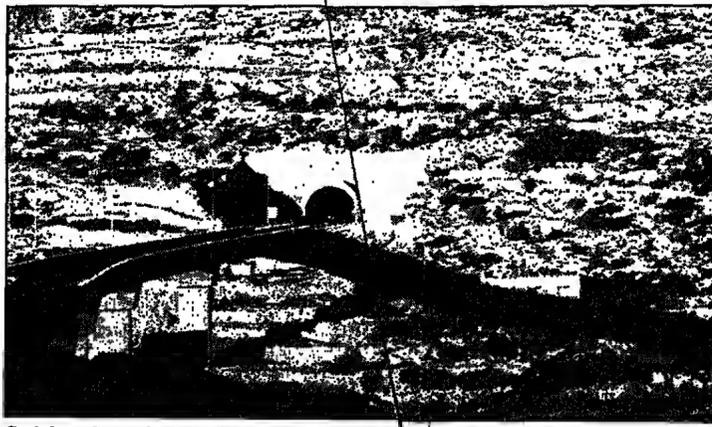
One Jerusalem lawyer speaks of her as "highly principled," but another legal commentator criticizes both her style and the substance of her legal arguments before the High Court. "She often bases her arguments on international laws, even when she knows they haven't been ratified in Israel," he says. "Sometimes she shouts at the judges and speaks to them in a way that goes beyond the limits of good taste."

His most serious criticism, however, concerns the very nature of the court system, especially the High Court: "The High Court is very limited in what it can do. It can't decide who is right. She puts her emphasis on justice rather than on the law. But justice is not her mandate."

Brayer, of course, sees it quite differently. The statement that scrolls across her computer screen continuously, "Law is war in Palestine," expresses her answer to the criticism. "It's a cat-and-mouse game," she says, and because the underpinnings of the legal system - "set up for the Jewish people" - are discriminatory, her role is not to work within it, but to undermine it.

Riding on the Disneyland bypass road

With the newly-opened twin-tunneled, single-spanned Bethlehem bypass road, it's a small world after all, writes Jay Bailey



Gush-bound cars zip along the new bypass road.

"... I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba and cry, 'Tis all barren!'"

- Laurence Sterne (1713-1768)

INTERESTING piece of trivia: the shortest distance between two points on a map is not a straight line. I'm serious - since the earth is a sphere, the optimum path would have to curve slightly. Proving this got me an award in high-school geometry.

I bring this up because only now do I recognize the vast circumlocution of the route which I've been cheerfully driving for the past year, a path which was anything but a straight line, horizontally or vertically.

The temporary Bethlehem bypass road, leaving Mt. Itha, snakes along a valley for about five minutes, climbs a nasty hill followed by two identical stretches of incline, winds in a treacherous, narrow belt around the back of Beit Jalla, and about 16 minutes later finally meets up with the new section of the Gush Etzion highway.

I've always sort of accepted it as a welcome alternative to driving through Bethlehem, and have

always praised its dramatic views of the valleys below. I rather enjoyed it.

Until now. Man, I'm retroactively hating it.

The new, final Bethlehem bypass is virtually a straight line, if it's even long enough to constitute a line. My gas-guzzling uphill trek is now a three-minute bolt through two tunnels and a bridge. It's like something out of the Twilight Zone; one minute I'm in Jerusalem, the next I'm "all the way out in the territories." It's as if someone dared the civil engineer to plot this road without ever turning his steamshovel's steering wheel.

Helpful signs every couple of meters remind us to turn our lights on and that Beersheba, albeit via Hebron, is a mere 79 kilometers away.

Oh, and the tunnels have names. I tremble in awe of the creative genius who named the first one Gillo Tunnel - yes, with two ls - and the second Refaim. I don't know, I suppose it's better than if the JNF had been called in to raise money for the Ethel and Martin Goldenheim of South Palm Beach, Florida, USA, Memorial Tunnel.

The insides of the tunnels are

coated in a delightfully natural, rough, textured material, giving them a cave-like feel rather than the tiled sterility of a hospital corridor. It's more like a tunnel in a ride at Disneyland.

The lanes are wide with "emergency" pit-stop areas along either side, which I like. I once drove all the way through the Lincoln Tunnel, linking New Jersey and New York, with a flat, stopping seemed like a bad idea. I'm thinking one of these spaces would be a great place to open a mokolet. My wife sees a gas station.

The bridge itself (as yet unnamed, Mrs Goldenheim!), though billed as the highest in

Israel, can't have much serious competition. Maybe I was born from the outset, having trained driving over a majestic suspension bridge, hanging gloriously hundreds of thick metal cables.

After all, it's Israel's No. 1idge. But alas, the base of the bridge is practically invisible as you drive across it on your way to the end tunnel. On either side, outback friends look up at us from their patios and backyards. I doubt they could throw rocks that high they tried. They'd have to visit their friends who live directly above the tunnel entrances to do that.

There's a terrifying irony in that security, thus far, does not seem to

be a priority; there are no soldiers monitoring cars as they enter from the Jerusalem side, and a single small unit on our side. No checkpoints in between. I would have thought there would be more of an effort made to prevent Ahmed from scoring major points with Allah by single-handedly removing the link between the settlers and Jerusalem.

Whatever the minor flaws of the current setup, I think we're all thrilled it's finally here. It's a short, quick way to reach the area south of Jerusalem and it looks like a solid, high-quality job. We'll give the tunnel driller a break. Then, it's on to Rehov Bar-Ilan.

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סניף תל אביב

Think
Wreckers
OUR OWN

Thinking a little harder about Jerusalem

IT'S time we thought about Jerusalem. We think about it all the time, of course. But it's time we thought a little harder. Because if the Palestinians don't get their share of it, there can be no successful conclusion to the peace process and what started in Oslo will end in disaster.

For that, we will be able to thank the Labor Party - and not only for the recklessness of Oslo itself, which started us down a road of whose ultimate route those setting cockily out on it had no idea, but also for subsequently reinforcing an attitude that can only run that road to the edge of a high cliff.

There was all along a central paradox in the Rabin-Peres government's thinking about Jerusalem. When it came to the question of this country's final borders, and of the future of Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria, the Jordan Valley and the Golan Heights, this government told us over and over: We can't afford to be emotional. Religious

and historical claims mustn't be allowed to dictate policy. All that matters is security. If we don't think rationally rather than mythically about the land of Israel, and about the fact that biblically resonant places like Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho and Shechem have no real military importance and can safely be given up, we will play into the hands of the fanatics and the enemies of peace.

Fair enough. One could argue with the premises of this assessment - perhaps the Jordan Valley and the mountains of Samaria do have military importance, perhaps a people lacking a mythical attachment to its land is rendered inherently insecure by an impaired national will - but the operative conclusions followed logically from the theoretical base.

But Jerusalem? What military importance, pray, does Jerusalem have that Hebron or Shechem (Nablus) do not? All three straddle the high ground of the same central mountain range that runs

down to Israel's coastal plain and all have roughly the same strategic value.

On what basis then, did the Rabin-Peres government declare, with the repetitive monotony of a mantra, that Jerusalem was not negotiable, that all of Jerusalem was forever part of Israel, that not an inch of Jerusalem would be relinquished?

On the basis of religion, history and myth.

For Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, in other words, Jerusalem was holy. Jerusalem was the eternal capital of the Jewish people. Jerusalem was ... did someone say something about thinking rationally?

Indeed, even from the standpoint of religion this is irrational. In the first place because if Jerusalem is holy, so are Bethlehem and Hebron; all are, as

far as Jewish tradition is concerned, part of the same divinely sanctified territory.

And in the second place, although the ancient rabbis did assign different levels of sanctity to different parts of this territory, 90 percent of what now constitutes municipal Jerusalem belongs to their lowest category. "There are ten degrees of [geographical] holiness," states the authoritative tractate of *Kelim* in the Mishna. And it continues:

"The land of Israel is holier than all other lands... Walled cities are holier [than the rest of the land of Israel] ... Inside the wall [of Jerusalem] is holier [than outside other walled cities] ... The Temple Mount is holier [than the rest of walled Jerusalem] ... The rampart [surrounding the Temple courtyard] is holier [than the Temple Mount] ... And so on up to the

Holy of Holies, which may be entered only by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement.

Even allowing for the fact that the walled area referred to by the Mishna was somewhat larger than today's Old City, this still leaves all of west Jerusalem and nearly all of East Jerusalem, to say nothing of the large sections of north and south Jerusalem developed by Israel after the Six Day War, on a religious par with Beerseba, Holon and Ramle.

"BUT THAT'S not how we Jews feel about Jerusalem!" I will be told.

No, it isn't. And Jewish feeling for Jerusalem, strong throughout history, was heightened by the city's unnatural partition between 1948 and 1967.

The only problem is that, if we are talking about feelings, the

Arabs have them too. I have been in many Palestinian homes in Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank, and I can hardly recall a single one of them in which there wasn't a picture, painting or tapestry of Jerusalem hanging on a wall, or a model of the Dome of the Rock displayed on a desk, table or shelf.

True, the religious passions involved are originally based on a rather absurd Moslem legend about Mohammed ascending to heaven from the site of the Jewish Temple - but we Jews might be expected to know a thing or two about the power of legends over men's lives.

And in any case, it's far from being just about that. You only have to glance at a map to see how crucial Jerusalem is to the Palestinians. It's not only their intellectual, commercial and political center; it's also their geographical heart, the hub connecting the southern and northern West Bank, without which even

the pittance of land they can get from us is for all practical purposes worthless.

It is inconceivable that they will agree to any permanent settlement in which at least part of this hub is not theirs, and without such a settlement, given the 30,000 or 40,000 armed PLO policemen that Messrs. Rabin and Peres were kind enough to introduce into our midst, we are in for some very bloody times.

Why not, then (unless we prefer to renege on Oslo altogether), as long as Jerusalem remains an open and administratively integrated city, consider giving the Palestinians its Arab neighborhoods for their capital, minus the dominant heights of the Mount of Olives?

I don't mean easily, of course; they should pay a high price for it, and we should drive a hard bargain in other areas that matter to us. The important thing at the moment isn't the details. It's to start thinking as rationally about Jerusalem as we do about anything else.

AGAINST THE GRAIN HILLEL HALKIN

Wreckers of our own

A VIEW FROM NOV
MOSHE KOHN

PROPHET Isaiah promises us that come the Redemption, the Jewish people's "wreckers and destroyers" will be expelled from our midst (49:17).

Because of our long, wretched experience with home-grown enemies, both the masses and some classical Bible commentators long ago came to read that passage as saying that our "wreckers and destroyers" would indeed be home-grown.

At the very beginning of our national history there were the 10 alarmist scouts (Numbers 13-14) and the mutinous Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Numbers 16).

There were the hellenizers of Hasmonean times, including some of the Hasmonean kings and priests, who, sometimes resorting to oppression and murder, would have substituted hellenic customs and mores for those of Judaism.

There was the nephew of the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo, general Tiberius Julius Alexander, who was second in command to the Roman general and later emperor Titus in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 CE.

Among the founders of the Spanish Inquisition and some of its most fervent inquisitors were conversos, including rabbis.

There was Nazi Germany's Field Marshal Erhard Milch, the man most responsible for making the Luftwaffe the force it was. He was a favorite of Hermann Goering, and when Goering was chided about "that Jew," he said, in the words of Vienna's turn-of-the-century rabidly antisemitic mayor, Karl Lueger, "I decide who is a Jew!"

In the pre-state Zionist struggle and in Israel's struggle since 1948 to survive and flourish, our enemies have had their squads of Jewish collaborators, both here and in the Diaspora.

tion increased from 80,000 in 1967 to 140,000 last year.

According to a City Hall spokesman, the authorities have approved master plans providing for the planning, licensing and construction of 15,000 housing units in most of the neighborhoods of eastern Jerusalem. An additional 10,000 units are to become available under master plans now in the final stages of processing.

THE EDITOR of *Terro Sancta*, the official publication of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, wrote in the September-October 1991 issue:

"It is well known that the annals of Eastern Christendom bear the marks of persecution and tears... We have seen in this century the genocide of the Armenian people of [Moslem] Turkey, the massacre of the Assyrian Nestorians in [Moslem] Iraq and the Christians [one might add the Antinists - M.K.] of Southern [Moslem] Sudan. The Pan-Islamic Conference in Lahore, recently approved a secret resolution by which the countries of the Middle East are committed to expel all Christians by the year 2000." (Israel, which is also in the Middle East, approved no such resolution.)

The editor of *Terro Sancta* continued: "...The Coptic minority of Egypt... are emigrating by the thousands to more benign places, or, unable to resist the social pressures, convert to the Moslem faith... Some 300,000 Lebanese Christians have left the Land of the Cedars since the beginning of the civil war..."

The January 12, 1992 issue of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, reported the pope's remarks to a gathering of diplomats accredited to the Vatican. He said *inter alia*: "There are countries... where Islam is the majority religion and where to this day Christians are not given the possibility of having at their disposal a single place of worship... And there are places where they are advised, quite simply, to leave the country..."

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on July 1, 1994: "Home of some of Christianity's holiest sites, Bethlehem... has seen a power struggle as the Muslims steadily encroach on Christian influence. While Christians still make up the bulk of the town's merchants, their facilities and clubs have been attacked by Moslem extremists. Graves, statues and crosses have been desecrated..."

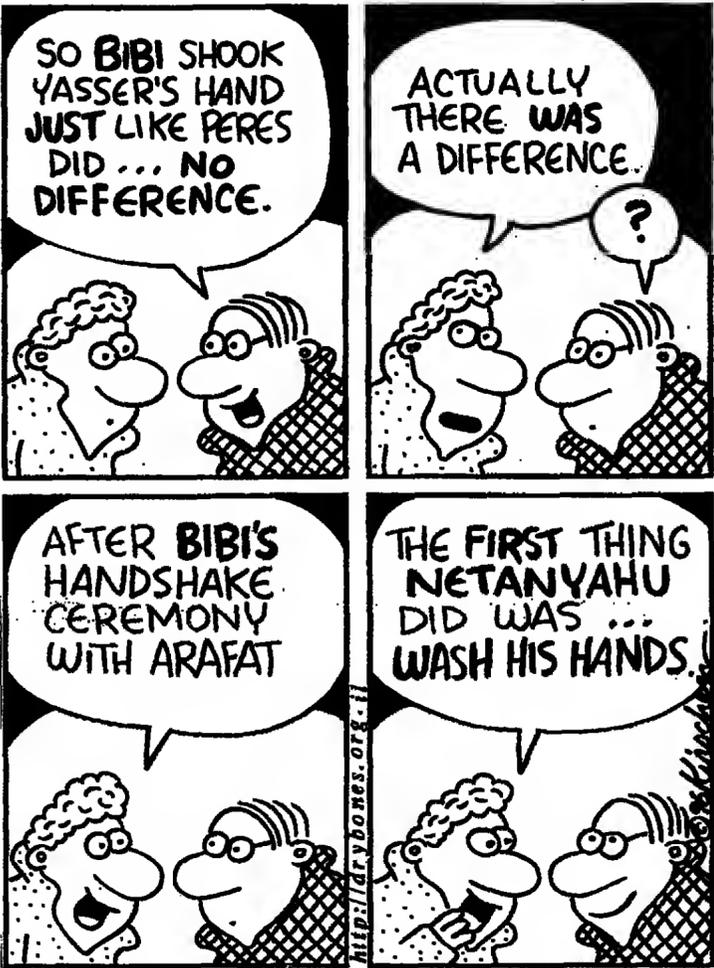
As for restrictions the authorities from time to time place on the movement of Christians (or Moslems) between their homes in the PNA, Bethlehem, etc., and Jerusalem, the Council of Europe's Human Rights Convention approved in 1950 stipulates in Article 9(2): "Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs [may] be subject to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

Even Jews, even in Israel, are entitled to such protection, even against would-be Arab terrorists.

A CATHOLIC official in Jerusalem tells me that St. Yves Society has no official Church link or aegis. We might expect the Church here to speak up against such slanders, or at least demand that the slanders stop pretending to speak in its name.

Thanks to Dr. Joseph Lerner of *Jerusalem*, co-director of *IMRA: Independent Media Review and Analysis*, and to Christians and Israel, published in *Jerusalem by the Association of Christians and Jews in Israel*.

Dry Bones



We must not let down needy schoolchildren

IT is not an unusual sight to see children sitting on the pavement selling dog-eared school books from their previous year's studies.

And sometimes books purchased with hard-earned cash are discontinued after only a year or two and the children can't even sell them.

The *Jerusalem Post* Toy Fund is besieged by requests at this time of year to help provide school books and supplies for hard-pressed families. The school year started this week. Don't let the children down.

Send your checks today to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, POB 81, Jerusalem 91000. Donors in the US wishing to receive tax benefits, can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 211 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017.

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The idea of God's hiddenness

SHABBAT SHALOM
SHLOMO RISKIN

"Then my anger will burn against them and I will forsake them. I will hide my face from them and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say on that day: 'Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?'" (Deut 31:17-18)

JUST before the final blessings at the very end of Deuteronomy, the second half of this week's double portion of *Nitzavim-Vayelech* arrives with a terrible warning. God tells Moses what will happen if Jews worship other gods: As punishment, He will keep himself "hidden." And hiddenness is something we are all familiar with. In a world such as ours, one of the most common cries is: "Where is God?"

The religious answer is "God is not dead; He is merely hidden."

One of the thorniest theological issues in any religion is how to tackle this question of a hidden God, a world in which evil people go unpunished while the good, tragically suffer. In this path-breaking work *Faith After the Holocaust*, Prof. Eliezer Berkovitz explores this concept as it appears in the Torah. I'd like to review these in order to help us glimpse the Divine notion of justice.

The text cited above says if we sin, God hides Himself, and the more we sin, the more hidden shall the face of God become. This idea of hiddenness as punishment is very logical if we posit the mutuality of the God-human relationship; the Almighty will relate to us in direct proportion to how we relate to Him.

But there is a second aspect: the hidden face of God may also be an expression of Divine indifference. This interpretation seems most appropriate to the Holocaust, a period when we can certainly suggest that God was "hidden" or, in more prosaic terms, He was asleep. "But it is for your sake that we are killed all day long; we are reckoned as sheep for slaughter. Awake! Why do you sleep, O Lord?" (Psalms 44:23-24) These agonizing words could have been spoken by the victims of Auschwitz.

A third understanding of hiddenness can be found in Isaiah and is, in some way, more disturbing than even the specter of an indifferent God. "You are a God who hides Yourself, You are a God who saves them." (Isaiah 45:15). And earlier, the prophet declares: "And I will anxiously anticipate a God who hides His face... and I will hope for Him. Behold, I and the children God has given me are for signs and for portents in Israel from the God of hosts who dwells in Mt. Zion." (Isaiah 8:17)

This indelible connection between a God of hiddenness and a God of salvation is a radical - even revolutionary - idea. Strangely enough, Isaiah's vision calls for redemption as something emanating from a hidden God. What can this mean? How can we achieve ultimate enlightenment from frustrating darkness?

The Almighty created an imperfect world awaiting perfection.

When will this perfection occur? When humanity learns to live in peace. At that time, God will become manifest, He and His name will become one, and the world will be perfected under the kingship of the Divine.

And God created such a world because He has full confidence that His creature-partners will eventually repent and perfect it! But additionally and even ironically, His current hiddenness conceals a terrible warning. God tells Moses what will happen if Jews worship other gods: As punishment, He will keep himself "hidden." What seems to be God's willingness to overlook evil is, in actuality, His waiting for repentance to emerge from the evildoer's own volition.

The existence of evil not-yet-punished does not necessarily restrict God's goodness. On the contrary, God has ultimate faith in the fact that the evildoer will eventually return to the source of ethics and morality. God's patience with sinners is an expression of His confidence in the human ability to better himself.

An amazing text in *Tractate Yoma* (69b) explains that the "Men of the Great Assembly" received their title because they restored greatness to the crown of God. When Israel had been crushed under the Babylonians and Romans, Jeremiah and Daniel expressed their despair by detracting from the Mosaic attributes of the Divine.

Moses had invoked "God, great and mighty and awesome..." (Deut. 10:17) Then came along Jeremiah and said: Gentiles are uprooting His Sanctuary, where is His greatness? - and he deleted "great." Came along Daniel and said: Gentiles are enslaving His children, where is His might? - And he deleted "mighty." Came along these (Men of the Great Assembly) and they said: Much the opposite! This is indeed God's greatness, that He was able to overcome His instincts, that he was able to be long-suffering to the wicked.

Perhaps those who destroyed the Holy Temple should have been immediately destroyed. But then we would find ourselves in a different kind of world, a world where the Divine has no confidence in human ability. God is not indifferent. He desperately wants us to perfect ourselves and so complete His world.

He appears hidden because He wants us to find Him.

A story is told about a hassidic master who came upon children playing hide and seek. When he saw one of the children crying, he stopped and asked: "Why the tears?" The child answered that he'd been hiding for the longest time, but no one had come to look for him.

The elderly Jew looked up to heaven and cried out: "Master of the universe! I know You're hiding because You want us to find You, but what happens if Your children stop looking?"

"Before it's too late, reveal Yourself."

Shabbat Shalom

LAWYER LINDA Brayer, an *olah* from South Africa, is executive legal director of the Jerusalem-based Society of St. Yves, which describes itself as the "Catholic Legal Resource Centre for Human Rights."

She has issued a three-page broadside, bearing the society's logo and her signature, entitled "Decimation of Christians in Occupied Territories of Palestine." Its aim is "to bring to the attention of Christians in the world that the Israeli government has begun to implement systematically policies and practices that are intended to wipe out the Christian community of East Jerusalem and the West Bank in occupied Palestine."

It contains a few legitimate complaints, none related to alleged "decimation," but it discredits itself by its slanderous language and its failure to cite substantiating facts.

Here are some facts to bear in mind if you encounter Brayer's farrago or anyone else's allegations about how we are committing genocide against our Arab Christian neighbors.

In 1948, when Israel was established, 34,000 Christians were living within the state's borders; today there are 157,000.

At that time, the areas of Judea and Samaria that Jordan occupied and called "West Bank" had 80,000 Christians; by 1967 there were 30,000, which is approximately the figure in the areas administered today by the PLO's "Palestinian National Authority/PNA."

In 1946, Jerusalem had 31,000 Christians, mostly in the eastern sector occupied in 1948 by Jordan. In 1961 there were 13,000 Christians in eastern Jerusalem. By 1967, when Jordan lost the area to us, the number had dwindled to 11,000. The figure today is estimated at 15,000.

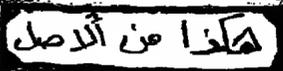
The capital's Moslem popula-

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An outsider becomes an insider

GRAPEVINE
GREER FAY CASHMAN

BRITISH writer Judy Cooper-Well celebrated the launching of her book on the people of Neveh Tzedek, the first Jewish neighborhood of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, at the Suzanne Dellal Center.

The people of the book along with the Ministry of Defense Publishing House and the Council for the Preservation of Old Buildings and Historic Sites all were present for the occasion. What antized many of those gathered was why Cooper-Well, who is neither a sabra nor a member of one of the pioneering families, devoted four years of her life to producing a book about Neveh Tzedek, where she herself has acquired a home. "I always envied them," she replied. "It gave me a special perspective."

TEL AVIV Mayor Roni Milo, who made a late appearance at the launch, was all too conscious that not so long ago, Neveh Tzedek was destined for demolition so that the City of Tel Aviv could be built on its ruins. Municipal policy today is to preserve old buildings, he said, adding that a thousand buildings have so far been designated for preservation and restoration — "and more are being added to the list."

Recalling that Neveh Tzedek was actually built in Jaffa, some years before the establishment of Tel Aviv, Milo said that he has told his colleague Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert that if he annoys him too much he will exercise his brinkmanship over the Jerusalem 3000 festival and will initiate a Jaffa 4000 festival. Jaffa, he pointed out smugly, is



Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo has Jaffa pride. (Hanoach Guttmann)



Socialite Devora Rejwan celebrated her 42nd birthday with style.

older than Jerusalem.

CONSIDERING that she looks 10 years younger, it's no wonder that Devora Rejwan made no bones about her age when she invited people to her magnificent Jerusalem home to celebrate her 42nd birthday.

Rejwan, whose family has long identified with Likud, graciously shared her special evening with Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon, who wasn't having a birthday, but whose electoral victory is still a frequent cause for toasts. Tichon's wife Ludmila, who has frequently described herself as a frustrated chanteuse, joined the professional entertainers to give well-received renditions of *When Autumn Leaves Start to Fall*, which she sang in French, and *Dark Eyes*, which she sang in Russian. Among the guests were Israeli Consul in Atlanta Arye Mekel and his wife Ruth, who

are on home leave, and Gideon Patt, the newly appointed president of Israel Bonds who is soon to take up residence in New York. Also present was cosmetics queen Penina Rosenbloom, who looked like a walking advertisement for her own products.

US AMBASSADOR Martin Indyk had probably not intended making a political statement when he agreed to attend Amit Women's annual scholarship dinner in honor of Maxine Miller, who was named Amit's woman of the year.

But given the situation, both in the air and on the ground, he could not resist terming the evening "momentous" because "my country is standing up to aggression in Iraq and your prime minister is meeting with Chairman Arafat in Erez." These two events of war and peace, he said, reminded him of Winston

Churchill's maxim, that it was better to jaw jaw than war war. Indyk seemed confident that the US and Israeli leaders together would achieve a secure and lasting peace.

Obviously eager for reports at the conclusion of the Netanyahu-Arafat meeting, Indyk, who also paid tribute to both Miller and Amit, stayed through the speeches but exited before the main course.

AT LAST it's definite. Ruby Rivlin this week took his place as a Likud MK, replacing Eliahu Ben-Elissar, Israel's ambassador to the US. Ben-Elissar, leaving nothing to chance, refused to resign from the Knesset before he was safely en route to Washington.

Foreign Minister David Levy delayed some of the procedural trappings related to an ambassador's credentials, and at one stage it was doubtful that Ben-Elissar would be able to leave on time.

Now it remains to be seen whether Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has attended several farewell receptions for Ben-Elissar, will stick by the gift which he promised to the new envoy.

At one of the farewells, Netanyahu told Ben-Elissar that there was need for him to get up and meet the plane if it just so happened that the prime minister of Israel and his wife should land in Washington at 3 in the morning. The test of the offer will come very soon.

Netanyahu will be in Washington next week and has other visits to the States scheduled over the next three months. In fact it's becoming quite a race between him and Ehud Olmert to see who travels the Israel-US shuttle more frequently.

The barely distinct tinkle of shattering glass

THE WEEK THAT WAS
MICHAL YUDELMAN

EVEN those who listened very carefully could not hear the tinkle of shattering glass as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took the hand of "the man with hair on his face," as the late prime minister Menachem Begin was wont to call Yasser Arafat.

Except, perhaps, those who hurried their political ideologies at their television screens.

In reality and despite the cliffhanger buildup the reluctant handshake between Bibi and Yasser looked like one of those cheap budget reproductions of the original historic reluctant handshake between the late Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat.

"Did you ever think you'd live to see this day?" gushed an over-excited BBC reporter. "Yes," answered an English Middle East professor. "The day I thought I'd never live to see was Rabin doing it."

One of those MKs now used to surfing the Internet with their kids said: "When Rabin did it, it was reality. Unbelievable. But now reality. When Bibi did it it was virtual reality."

Less kind or with-it persons commented, "Cartoon!"

Bibi likes cartoons. Rabin used to do a wig and sunglasses to meet a King Fahd here, a King Hassan there, a King Hussein on the side — Arabs with an assured footnote in the history books. Netanyahu puts on a disguise to sneak off with the family to see Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

Oh, the reality was real enough. Battalions of script-writers and directors labored to copy the real thing in every detail, their "secret," but-in-all-the-papers-tomorrow marathon negotiations late into the witching hours in a Tel Aviv "safe house" on Itzik Manger Street. Intolerable pressure from the US, Egypt, the European Union and even from a mysterious "within," according to Reuters.

It all started even the original supporting actors, the Norwegian husband-wife "dream-team" of Teria Larsen and Mona Yul, complete with their props — dramatic apartments for "clandestine" (bring your long black X-Files raincoat) contacts.

Thus spake Labor's Nissim Zvili: "Three days of nocturnal negotiations in Tel Aviv and capitals around the world, including significant Israeli concessions, bring the Netanyahu government to its greatest achievement yet. It arranges a meeting between Netanyahu and Arafat. If it weren't so sad, it would be funny."

Has the Israeli public become too blasé? Perhaps it saw Rabin, Peres, and even (not such a great shock) the affable David Levy do it. So, even like Noel Coward did it, let's fall in love. Or at least into bilateral mutually beneficial reciprocity and understandings. So what was the sum of secret

meetings in Paris, open ones in Cairo, foot-dragging, hard to get but ask me anyway, screaming headlines of "soon" and "perhaps even today"? A government that cried wolf while Saddam was raping Irbil?

What really was curious was how Netanyahu was conducting negotiations for the historic meeting via left and right hands (no political innuendo implied) that were not on shaking terms. "We signed an agreement with Dr. Dore Gold, and then came Attorney Yitzhak Molcho (Netanyahu's personal envoy) and told Arafat that Gold has no authority to sign," complained Saeb Erekat, the Palestinian Authority's official in charge of municipal affairs.

Even hawkish Likud MK Uzi Landau had to agree, albeit reluctantly, with *Yedioth Aharonot* columnist Nahum Barnea's conclusion: "Don't let Arafat's nebbesh expression lead you astray. He is putting Bibi through school."

What was meant to be a brilliant move, which would bring Arafat on his knees to the meeting with Netanyahu, has turned over on its face in the last few days.

Now Netanyahu wants a meeting, and Arafat is setting conditions. He has an internal opposition, he tells Netanyahu's envoys. We must first make sure the meeting is not for nothing. Anyone ever hear an old Middle East anecdote about a frog and a scorpion?

A KISS IS JUST A KISS
"No kisses," hissed Bibi's men. "And no bags."

The prime minister ("His Excellency," murmured the Chairman in his impeccably borrowed British imperial usage) will agree at the very, very most to a handshake.

Again the shades (no disrespect intended) of Rabin's handshake and the great question banging then thick in the air: "Will he recoil at the last moment from the arch terrorist? Who can ever forget the wonderful Bill Clinton's subtle push in the lower verberae to both Rabin and Arafat at the crucial moment, pre-empting a disaster before the perspiring masses of the world cameras?"

The "secret" plan was to get the meeting under way before the ceremonial handshake which might break into Arafatian bugs and kisses.

No, let's do this the American way: flash, click, fade, cool it. Then let them fade in cool and collected, after whatever private tussle, to face the press with aplomb, without danger of an emotional outburst or American cruise missile strikes... Alas, mused some MKs, not good enough. Bibi simply doesn't want to be kissed by a man with hair on his face. Sigh! If only his wife was Ukrainian, we might have a New World Order like when the burning Busb spoke with the voice of a Quayle.

IDEOLOGY, BYE IDEOLOGY
To Likudniks, the handshake was bad enough.

Uzi Landau, Ariel Sharon and Moshe Peled joined in sitting shiva for Likud ideology before the Likud central committee meeting yesterday. Don't even ask Yitzhak Shamir and Rafael Eitan.

Perhaps there was no shattering glass as Netanyahu and Arafat went up the same stairs that starred in the infamous (if somewhat successful) Likud election propaganda clip, but many politicians could hear the crash of many sacred Likud precious principles hitting the tiles of reality. Like no recognition ever of the

P.L.O. And as for Arafat — yeaacbl!

There too, mused an increasingly presidential-looking Shimon Peres, went the ideology of the Greater Eretz Yisrael. The meeting with Arafat was on the basis of accepting the Oslo agreements, which inter alia rule out the annexation of most of the occupied territories.

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid said: "I didn't hear any glass breaking, but the Likud's word was broken once and for all. Gone is the non-recognition of the P.L.O., Netanyahu arrived at the Erez checkpoint without the Likud's ideology. It is over and done with."

Still, Sarid regretted Netanyahu "coming to the meeting with nilly, under Egyptian, American, Jordanian, European and internal pressures. I hope he discovered the devil isn't so bad and might even be a partner."

Sarid could only wonder why Meretz members, after 25 years of saying Israel should negotiate with the P.L.O., should remain so stoned for having been proved remarkable prophets.

Peres, at last vindicated for his outrageous prediction on the government's first day in office that Netanyahu would meet with Arafat, shake his hand and do all that he had blasted Labor for doing when he was in opposition, said the meeting was "a tremendous victory for Labor's way."

But he added somewhat sadly, that "on this day [of the meeting], I think most of all of Rabin; Netanyahu should ask for his forgiveness and have the courage and decency to say the truth. It's time he admitted that he was wrong in his election campaign, and that it is necessary to meet Arafat. You can't raise a whole generation on deception."

Peres was not the only one in Labor thinking of Rabin, "who was murdered for breaking the way, the same way Netanyahu is treading now," as one activist put it.

MK Moshe Shahal said Netanyahu's handshake with Arafat finally exposed his propaganda for the grand deception it really was, the greatest swindle ever. "It was a deliberate, cynical act of fraud by a politician who wanted to get to power, and came to demonstrations against Rabin in which Rabin was portrayed with a keffiyeh on his head and as a Nazi officer."

They delegitimized the prime minister. He was murdered because of that incitement. And, added a listener, "guess who inherited?"

PIP PIP
This column is going on holiday for a month, so the editor may permit an unorthodox personal footnote.

My husband, who is very liberal for a man, just staggered in from a "literary breakfast" with British novelist Jeffrey (Lord) Archer and announced "they're all mad, I tell you." He meant the Brits, the Right, and all persons (except me) who aren't Irish or Jewish.

Archer, making a grand entrance at the Tel Aviv Sheraton Aquamarine Room on behalf of "British Conservatives Supporting Israel" was politely offered an orange juice by a Sheraton PR person. "Yes," he bellowed with upper class British rudeness, "but only if it's freshly squeezed."

Since the gathering was a mere two kilometers from Jaffa, it was pointed out to him we might not have a problem with oranges. My husband's quip that in the roomful of Israeli literary editors, Archer probably was the only one who couldn't write; went down like an unrefreshed orange. Pip pip.

BRULIK



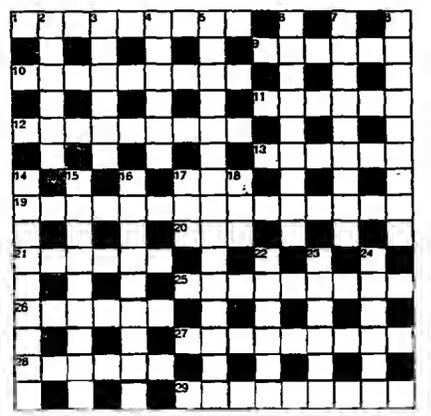
by DOSH

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Stroke of bad luck upsetting mechanics (9)
 - 9 Quarter day? (6)
 - 10 Cash in ear had been exchanged for something very sweet (9)
 - 11 Symbol of one's social position (6)
 - 12 Welcome sign of nervousness (9)
 - 13 Chew noisily during a crisis (6)
 - 17 Trust worker (3)
 - 19 Examiner of pupils whether they are at school or not (15)
 - 20 Where Tom may sit and sup (3)
 - 21 Be sparing with money initially in the bag (6)

- 25 How students succeed gradually (2,7)
 - 26 Help donkey, it's in trouble (6)
 - 27 Man is clue perhaps, male as the answer (9)
 - 28 Name of two individuals in the fifties (6)
 - 29 A duke has the address, love (9)
- DOWN**
- 2 I said as I approached, here's leaders prophet (6)
 - 3 Small creature found by rotter in American intelligence unit (6)
 - 4 A cheap alternative for the lawless boogiana (6)
 - 5 Smart country boy and girl tucking into a dish (7,8)

- 6 Later Bill got one alternative (9)
- 7 Britain has an unruly symbol (9)
- 8 Salt from the shop pa exchanged (9)
- 14 Bobby reads the list (9)
- 15 Baseball player doesn't have much of break (9)
- 16 Frosts, say, coming before second half of winter, according to would-be poet (9)
- 17 A couple of new drivers had the lot (3)
- 18 Best quality surface (3)
- 22 His attack might be foiled (6)
- 23 One allowed marine into the band (6)
- 24 Favour the shed (4-2)



SOLUTIONS

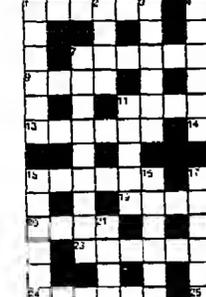
ACROSS

- 10 CASH
- 11 TIE
- 12 WELCOME
- 13 CHOMP
- 17 TRUST
- 19 EXAMINER
- 20 PUB
- 21 BE SPARING
- 25 GRADUALLY
- 26 HELP
- 27 MAN
- 28 FIFTIES
- 29 DUKE

DOWN

- 2 I
- 3 MICE
- 4 CHEAP
- 5 BOY
- 6 LATER
- 7 BRITAIN
- 8 SALT
- 14 BOBBY
- 15 PLAYER
- 16 FROST
- 17 COUPLE
- 18 SURFACE
- 22 FOILED
- 23 MARINE
- 24 FAVOUR

QUICK CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1 Regard (6)
 - 4 Machine (6)
 - 7 Make firm (9)
 - 9 Lessen (4)
 - 10 Cad (4)
 - 11 Delete (5)
 - 13 Emanate (6)
 - 14 Chatter (6)
 - 15 Admittance (6)
 - 17 First-born (6)
 - 19 Silk net (5)
 - 20 Sporting side (4)
 - 22 A Great Lake (4)
 - 23 Fabulous (9)
 - 24 Skin disease (6)
 - 25 More profound (6)

- DOWN**
- 1 Degenerate (6)
 - 2 Gaelic (4)
 - 3 Scanty (6)
 - 4 Silent (anag) (6)
 - 5 Pour forth (4)
 - 6 Develop (6)
 - 7 Vital (9)
 - 8 Paganism (9)
 - 11 White heron (5)
 - 12 Bird of prey (5)
 - 15 Whole (6)
 - 16 Brilliant discovery (6)
 - 17 Evaded (6)
 - 18 Wobble (6)
 - 21 Poetic lake (4)
 - 22 White-tailed (4)

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Ra'anana: Marcella
141 Ahuza, 09-7741125

Jerusalem: Ann, Maurice
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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Friday, September 6, 1996

13

Meridor seeks party support for budget plans

EVELYN GORDON

FINANCE Minister Dan Meridor has requested an urgent meeting with all coalition members of the Knesset Finance Committee to impress upon them the need to support the government's decisions in all matters relating to the budget.

Meridor decided to call the meeting after the committee failed to vote on a hike in water prices for farmers, which would have enabled the government to reduce its subsidization of water prices, and thereby the deficit. All coalition members, Meridor said, must mobilize behind the "national economic effort" to return the economy to a healthy path.

Finance Committee chairman Avraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism) said the committee declined to vote on the proposal, because a public commission was set up last year to study the whole issue of water prices, and the committee wanted to know what was happening with this commission. The commission was supposed to have submitted its conclusions during the first quarter of this year, Ravitz said, and he wanted at least to find out why it had not and when its conclusions would be ready.

Meanwhile, the committee approved a series of changes in the rules governing a fund for government-guaranteed loans to small busi-

nesses, after the Treasury and the Industry and Trade Ministry reached a compromise on the issue. The committee had unanimously opposed the original proposal, which was never discussed with the Industry Ministry. Ravitz had said on Monday that he would not bring the issue to a vote unless the two ministries reached an agreement.

Under the compromise proposal, the government's overall liability will still be decreased from 30 percent to 20% of the total outstanding loans, as the Treasury had wanted. This was originally opposed by small-business advocates in the committee, because reducing the government guarantees would mean increasing the commercial banks' liability. This in turn would result in increased demands for collateral, which many small businesses might have trouble meeting.

However, the Treasury withdrew its demand that the amount of capital loan applicants are required to supply be increased from 25% to 35% of the cost of the project in cases where 30% or more of the money will be invested in current expenses rather than fixed assets. Small-business advocates considered this clause the more detrimental of the two, since many business would find it very difficult to produce 35% of the capital needed.

Unemployment down to 6% in second quarter

DAVID HARRIS

THE number of unemployed averaged 6 percent in the second quarter, a 0.3% decrease over the same period last year, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday. The seasonally adjusted figure averaged 6.4%, down 0.2% on the previous three months.

The number of unemployed actively seeking work in any given four weeks between April and June stood at 128,500, a slight fall on the same period last year.

The number of jobless women reached 7.2%, a 0.4% drop on the previous quarter, and 1% lower than in the last three months of 1995.

The number of people working,

excluding those in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza and foreign workers, totalled 2,025,000, a 3.4% increase (67,000) on the same period last year.

The total workforce reached 2,154,000, a 3.1% increase on the weekly average in April to June last year. In the same period this year, the workforce comprised 53.8% of the total population, added the CBS.

62.1% of men are considered part of the workforce, and 45.8% of women. In comparison to the equivalent period in 1995, these figures show a 0.5% fall among men, but a 0.6% rise among

women. The number of employed, after seasonal adjustments, totalled 2,019,000, a 2% increase on the first quarter.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment figure for the first half of 1996 stood at 6.5%, down 0.2% on the second half last year, and 0.6% lower than the January to June total in 1995.

The number of unemployed reached some 140,000, compared to 148,000 in the previous six months.

The number of people who did not work at all over a full six months fell from 73,000 between January and June last year, to 61,000 in the first half this year.

RAMTA to increase its share of train building program

DAVID HARRIS

RAMTA, a subsidiary of Israel Aircraft Industries, is expected to increase its stake in Israel's rail rolling stock program to 50 percent.

The Beersheba-based company currently has a 30% interest in the contract to supply the Railways Authority with seven self-propelled IC-3 carriages. The Danish firm ADtranz Denmark holds a 70% interest.

However, negotiations are expected to be concluded to give RAMTA a 50% share for the construction of nine additional carriages, and an option for a further eight. The added percent-

age should bring the company an extra \$20m, according to program manager Richard Sarfati.

RAMTA is also the sole developer of the wing tips for the new Boeing 777 aircraft, in addition to its production of land and sea patrol vehicles, and anti-mine devices.

Meanwhile, Beersheba Mayor Yitzhak Rager has called on the government to commit itself to building a railway from Tel Aviv to Eilat via Beersheba.

Rager also repeated his statement that the Negev's largest

city will be the first in the country to have a light-railway system.

While describing National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon as "a super-builder" who gets things done, Rager said he will not respond to words of encouragement from the government, but only welcome action.

Having received promises from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other ministers that Beersheba will be a city of 500,000 people by 2000, Rager said it must include a fully integrated transport system, with the rail network a top priority.

Sharansky: New aid law must send a positive message to investors

DAVID HARRIS

WHATEVER the contents of the new capital-investment aid law, its conditions must not be changed for at least four years, Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky said following the publication of the Gahal Committee interim report on Wednesday.

The committee's recommendations include the abolition of the loan guarantees in all preferential zones, and the reduction in tax benefits for domestic investors in areas other than the top priority zones A and B.

The committee was set up following the cabinet's July decision to reduce aid in zone A development areas from 34 percent to 20%, and to 10% in zone B areas.

The committee, under the authority of the Treasury and Industry and Trade Ministry, has been charged with examining the existing law,

proposing reforms, and alternative methods of funding.

The committee, whose recommendations are now being considered by the two ministries, has called for foreign and home investors in "approved factories" to receive the same tax benefits, which currently stand at 10% for foreign investors and 25% for Israelis.

In zones A and B company tax rates should be reduced to 33% over the next two years, the committee said.

In the next financial year, the Treasury estimates the lowering of capital aid levels will save the government some NIS 500 million. The committee is investigating the optimum ways of utilizing this capital.

Once passed, the new law must not be amended in the short- to mid-term, said Sharansky. This, he said, will send a negative message to prospective investors, who need to receive an impression of stability.

On the other hand, Sharansky defended the decision to lower the maximum aid to 20%. "We are not a cash dispensing machine," he said.

Meanwhile, the Manufacturers Association accused the Treasury of presenting false figures about interest in the aid package. Finance Ministry statistics claim 9% of investments take advantage of the aid program, according to the association's economics department head Shuky Abramovich.

This figure takes into account all forms of investment, including in electricity, water, private services, transport and communications, which do not qualify for the aid, said Abramovich. The association puts the real figure at an annual average of 40% from 1991 to 1995.

Bank Hapoalim expects to reduce holdings by deadline

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

BANK Hapoalim is expected to complete all the procedures to reduce its holdings in non-banking companies by the end of the year, as required by the banking law, without having to receive an extension, a Bank Hapoalim spokesperson said yesterday.

The spokesperson was referring to rumors that Bank Hapoalim may require an extension in selling its surplus non-bank holdings, similar to Bank Leumi.

All Israeli banks must cut their holdings in non-bank companies to 25% or less by December 31, under a banking law. Assuming Bank Hapoalim does not sell all of its excess non-banking holdings by this time, the assets will go into receivership and will then be sold by the Treasury.

So far, Hapoalim has sold its surplus holdings in Ampal and the Investment Company of Bank Hapoalim. By the end of the year the bank will have to dispose of its 75% holding in Dvir and about 6% of Clal.

Earlier this week, Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair ruled to exceed Bank Leumi's deadline for selling off its holdings in Africa-

Israel. Meanwhile, Bank Leumi is negotiating with the Wertheimer-Zissar group in an attempt to reach an agreement to push through Bank Leumi's plan for the spin-off of Migdal from Africa Israel. The transaction is necessary to go ahead with the sale of 40 percent of Migdal to Assicurazioni Generali, Italy's largest insurer.

According to estimates Bank Leumi is interested in getting the Wertheimer-Zissar consortium's agreement to support the spin-off of the shareholders meeting planned for September 19. The Wertheimer-Zissar consortium wants to sell their holdings in Africa Israel in participation with Bank Leumi's surplus holdings.

In order to implement the spin-off, Bank Leumi needs the approval of 75% of Africa Israel's shareholders at the shareholders meeting.

The bank currently has 65% of the controlling shares and 55% of the stock capital. Wertheimer-Zissar holds 14% of the company's controlling shares and stock capital. The shares were purchased several weeks ago in an attempt to torpedo the Migdal spin-off.

Poalim takeover bid for Maman fails

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

POALIM Capital Markets' attempts to establish a consortium to take over Maman Cargo Terminals and Holdings has failed because of institutional investors' decision not to sell their stock.

In reaction, shares in Maman, the country's air-cargo monopoly, plunged 10 percent at the start of trading on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange yesterday, after rising 60% over two weeks amid rumors of a brewing takeover.

During the last few days, Poalim Capital Markets, a member of the Bank Hapoalim Group, has tried to purchase a package of shares in Maman, representing about 20% of the company's stock. Poalim planned to then sell the shares in one package to a consortium that would be able to take over the company with either of its majority shareholders, or become a partner in the company.

Capital market sources said Poalim Capital Markets did not manage to purchase shares from the institutional investors, members of the Bank Hapoalim and Bank Leumi groups. The institutional investors considered selling the shares, but some of them

subjected their joining the consortium to the sale of their shares in Maman to another consortium within 24 hours. According to the source, the potential buyers were not willing to meet this deadline, an objection which led to the cancellation of the takeover attempt.

"In the morning it was clear that Poalim did not accumulate enough shares or buyers to buy the stock. It looks like this is the end of the takeover attempt," said one source.

Maman is jointly controlled by Securitas and El Al, through its subsidiary Teshet. The two companies both have a 26 percent stake in Maman. The companies' joint control is in accordance with a five-year voting agreement which is due to expire September 15.

Maman's remaining shares are held by institutional investors from the Bank Hapoalim and Bank Leumi groups which together hold 25.9% of the company's shares.

Bank Hapoalim's provident funds control 11.7% of the shares, the bank's mutual funds 8.7% and Bank Leumi's provident funds 5.45%.

Analysts say Koor will perform better in 1997

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

KOOR industries shares are attractive but undervalued relative to the local market, Lehman Brothers said in their economic report on the company, which was published yesterday.

The company forecasts Koor will post earnings at NIS 37.08 per share in 1996 and NIS 41.11 in 1997. These estimates are based on Lehman Brothers' assumption that Koor's existing operations are expected to perform well, especially the telecommunications and agro-chemicals division, which made significant contributions to first half earnings.

"We expect continued solid growth despite the temporary weakness in the building materials division, and retain our current 2-outperform rating," said Lehman.

Koor is expected to continue investing in tourism and property, as well as further expanding its international focus in the telecommunications and agro-chemical

sectors, the economists predicted.

Koor shares are currently discounted at some 19% of the company's underlying valuation, making it a very attractive investment, according to Lehman Brothers.

Koor is currently trading at approximately 6.7 times Lehman Brothers estimate for 1997, and

just 7.4 times their estimate for 1996.

According to Lehman Brothers, Koor shares had performed well during the first few months after the company's equity issue in September 1995. The stock has moved in line with the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange and is now about 11% below its offering price, added Lehman Brothers.

The analysts said Koor ranks as the country's sixth largest company,

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ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS

Patrah (foreign currency deposit rates) (29.7.96)

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (USD 100,000)	4.750	4.875	5.375
Pound sterling (£100,000)	2.570	4.000	4.125
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.750	1.875	2.250
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	1.000	1.125	1.500
Yen (10 million yen)	—	—	—

(Rates very higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (5.9.96)

CURRENCY BASKET	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.5117	3.5684	—	—	3.5422
U.S. dollar	3.1174	3.1877	3.08	3.22	3.1440
German mark	2.1089	2.1579	2.08	2.17	2.1238
Pound sterling	4.8818	4.8702	4.80	5.04	4.8857
French franc	0.5198	0.5236	0.80	0.84	0.8135
Japanese yen (100)	2.8938	2.9061	2.81	2.85	2.8831
Dutch florin	1.8787	1.8070	1.84	1.84	1.8825
Swiss franc	2.5844	2.6281	2.54	2.67	2.8083
Swedish krona	0.4883	0.4788	0.48	0.49	0.4744
Norwegian krona	0.4871	0.4850	0.47	0.51	0.4912
Danish krona	0.5490	0.5838	0.53	0.57	0.5498
Finland mark	0.8987	0.7048	0.88	0.72	0.8887
Canadian dollar	2.5770	2.3198	2.23	2.35	2.2505
Australian dollar	2.4983	2.5061	2.42	2.55	2.4902
S. African rand	0.8833	0.7045	0.62	0.71	0.6888
Belgian franc (10)	1.0218	1.0381	1.00	1.06	1.0205
Austrian schilling (10)	2.8888	3.0382	2.90	3.08	3.0184
Italian lira (1000)	2.0625	2.0658	2.02	2.13	2.0629
Jordanian dinar	4.8300	4.8300	4.83	4.83	4.4016
Egyptian pound	0.8900	0.9300	0.88	0.96	0.8904
ECU	3.9578	4.0316	4.00	4.08	4.0228
Irish punt	5.0710	5.1528	4.98	5.28	5.1121
Spanish peseta (100)	2.4877	2.5279	2.44	2.57	2.5132

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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Key Representative Rates

Table with 2 columns: Currency and Rate. Includes US dollar (NIS 3.1440 -0.10%), Sterling (NIS 4.9337 +0.13%), and Mark (NIS 2.1235 +0.21%).

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Table of international stock market indices including NYSE, FTSE 100, Nikkei, and others with their respective changes.

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Table of NYSE stock movements including volume, advanced, and decline statistics.

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Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Table of foreign financial data including futures, options, and bonds.

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Comstock Trading Ltd. (Date 5-SEP-96)

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Table of Tel Aviv stock prices for various companies like Bank Leumi, Bank Hapoalim, etc.

Two-sided trading

Table of Tel Aviv stock prices for various companies, including a section for 'AFTERNOON' trading.

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PROPERTY, BUILDING & AGRICULTURE

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Table of Tel Aviv stock prices for parallel listed companies.

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PARIS

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LONDON

Table of international stock prices for various companies from London.

FRANKFURT

Table of international stock prices for various companies from Frankfurt.

Comstock Trading Ltd. (Date 5-SEP-96)

STOCKS influenced by CPI expectations

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ

Two-Sided Index

Maof Index

186.83 +0.85%

196.50 +0.59%

Two-Sided Index

Maof Index

STOCKS are likely to be influenced by inflation expectations in the days to come...

Share prices were also boosted by the first meeting between Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The Maof index rose 0.59% to 196.60 and the Two-Sided Index rose 0.85% to 186.83.

Of 984 shares trading, nearly seven times as many rose as fell. Some NIS 82.2 million worth of shares changed hands, NIS 10.5 million above Wednesday's level and about NIS 20 million more than last month's average daily trading level.

The Bank of Israel last changed interest rates on August 29, when it lowered the rate at which it lends to banks 0.5 percentage points to 15.8%.

Stocks gained for a second day yesterday, amid rising bond prices and declining pressure from fund redemptions.

Stands gained for a second day yesterday, amid rising bond prices and declining pressure from fund redemptions.

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Stocks influenced by CPI expectations

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HEBREW UNIV. COLLEGE, 13 King David St. Shabbat morning service, 9:30 a.m.
JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, The Baptist House Center, #4 Narkis Street, Sunday, 11 a.m., Tel. 02-625942.

MORESHET YISRAEL - Conservative 4 Agon. Dr. Avraham Feder, Rabbi. Friday Mincha 6:30 p.m. Shabbat 8:30 a.m., Mincha 5:55 p.m. Pre-Sabbat Study 9:00 p.m. Sehitot Service 10:00 p.m. Daily Minyan 7:00 a.m.
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ART GUIDE
HAIFA
THE REUBEN AND EOTH HECHT MUSEUM, (Haifa University). Permanent exhibition: The People of Israel in Eretz Yisrael - Phoenicians on the Northern Coast of Israel in the Biblical Period - Illness and Healing in Ancient Times - Impressionism and the Jewish School of Paris. Open Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 10-4; Tue. 10-7; Fri. 10-1. Sat. 10-2. ADMISSION FREE.

ART GUIDE
JERUSALEM
MUSEUMS
OLD YESHUV COURT MUSEUM. Life in the Jewish community in the Old City, mid-19th century - World War II. 8 Or Haganah Jewish Quarter, Old City. Sun-Thur. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
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GENERAL ASSISTANCE

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Friday, September 6
Jerusalem: Kupat Holim Clial, Straus A, 3 Avdot, 670-680; Balsam, Salah e-Din, 827-2315; Shuaflot, Shuaflot Balm, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Horod's Gate, 628-2058.
Tel Aviv: Pe'er Market, 81 Yehuda Hayemini, 682-2973; Shlomo Hamelech, 78 Shlomo Hamelech, 524-8481.
Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Clal Pharm, 114 Ahuva, Ra'anana, 910211.
Netanya: Neot Shaked, Ezorim Commercial Center, 352484.
Kiryat area: Harman, 4 Simat Modin, Kiryat Motzin, 970-7770.
Haifa: Magen David, 13 Gausa, 962-5205.
Herzliya: Clal Pharm, Beit Marzuzim, 6 Maskit (nr. Sderot Hagalim), Herzliya Pituah, 558472, 558407. Open 10 a.m. to midnight.
Upper Nazareth: Clal Pharm, Lev Ha'ir Mail, 570468. Open 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
DUTY HOSPITALS
Friday, September 6
Jerusalem: Shara Zedek (Internal); Hadassah Ein Kerem (surgery, orthopedics, obstetrics, o

Israeli Arab politicians give cautious welcome to Netanyahu-Arafat meeting

DAVID RUDGE

ISRAELI Arab politicians were lukewarm in their reaction to the meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

They described it as "a positive step in the right direction," but warned that it would prove worthless if no practical measures followed.

"We congratulate the prime minister on the meeting, even though it was long overdue and Netanyahu didn't do this because he wanted to, but because of pressure and reality," said Mohammed Darawshe, spokesman for the Democratic Arab Party.

"Nevertheless, we see the meet-

ing as a positive step towards recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people and the leadership of PA chairman Arafat, as well as recognition of the fact that the Palestinian issue is the key to peace and stability in the region.

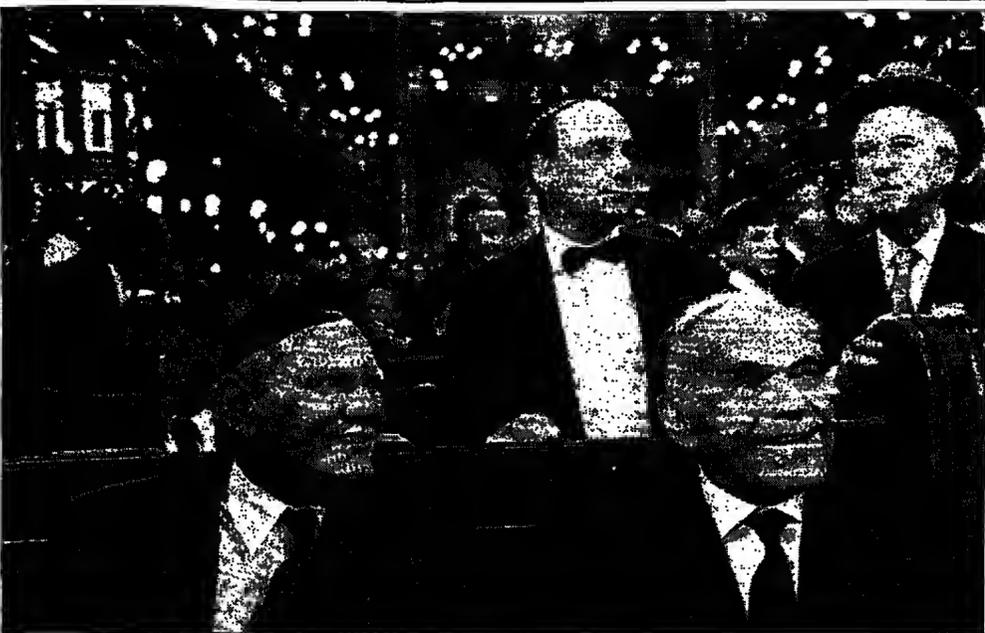
"But we regret that the meeting did not deal with practical issues regarding the implementation of agreements between Israel and the Palestinians. If no concrete steps are taken to implement existing agreements and promote the peace process with the Palestinians, it would have been better if the meeting had not occurred."

His comments were echoed by

Hadash secretary-general Mohammed Baraki.

"We think the meeting was positive and that Netanyahu, as prime minister and leader of the Likud, took a step forward," he said. "We still haven't heard, however, from the Likud or Netanyahu, any significant changes on basic positions, regarding permanent status or implementation of existing agreements."

He stressed that Hadash is planning a series of measures to put pressure on the government to speed-up the peace process and implement existing agreements, including redeployment in Hebron and the release of Palestinian prisoners.



Hungarian President Arpad Goncz (left) and former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir smile during yesterday's ceremonies reopening Budapest's Dohanyi Utca synagogue, the largest in Europe. (Reuters)

Budapest synagogue reopens after renovation from wartime bomb damage

BUDAPEST (Reuter) Jews from Hungary and around the world gathered in Budapest yesterday to officially reopen Europe's biggest synagogue, a sign of Judaism's revival in Hungary since World War II.

"I think it's an enormously significant event symbolizing the return of full religious freedom, respect for all faiths by a democratic government and an increasingly democratic society," US congressman Tom Lantos said before the ceremony.

Lantos, who was born in Hungary before the war and had his bar mitzva at the synagogue, was one of thousands of Hungarian Jews who escaped Nazi death camps with the aid of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg.

Thousands of people were expected to attend the late afternoon ceremony at the elegant, gold-domed, Moorish-style temple rebuilt at a cost of 1.35 billion forints (\$9 million), 80 percent of which was donated by the Hungarian government.

The 137-year-old Dohanyi Utca synagogue, the largest outside the US and as long as a soccer field, was extensively damaged during World War II.

The building was hit by 27 bombs and served as shelter for thousands of Jews after the Nazi-aligned government created a Jewish

ghetto in Budapest. Hungary had a population of 800,000 Jews before the war but 600,000 died in camps under the Nazis.

There are 80,000 to 100,000 Jews in Hungary today.

Former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir and his wife Shulamit flew to Hungary for the event, bringing a message of friendship for the Hungarian people from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, an Israeli embassy official said.

"I feel honored to convey the best wishes of the Israeli prime minister and government for the reopening of this grand building," Shamir said in remarks prepared for delivery at the ceremony.

"We remember our brothers who carried the burden and endured the suffering of the Jewish people and were brave enough to face the evil that killed several hundred thousand (Hungarian) Jews," Shamir said.

"At the same time we feel happy because those who hate us have not managed to destroy us."

Shamir said Wallenberg, who was arrested by the Soviets after the war and disappeared into the Soviet prison system, had been one of the few to befriend Jews in their darkest hour.

"We have to remember to cherish the mem-

ory of Raoul Wallenberg who saved several tens of thousands of Jews, and also those other few foreign diplomats who did the same.

"We also have to pay homage to all those Hungarians who saved Jewish lives, risking their own lives. Their names are engraved among the 'true people' of the world forever."

The ceremony, scheduled to last three hours, was to include the return of the Torah scrolls to the gilded, 8.2 meter tall ark.

They had been removed for safekeeping while the synagogue remained in a state of near-collapse under the communist authorities who ruled Hungary until 1989.

Lantos said he was aware of a recent spate of vandalism in Jewish cemeteries in Hungary but praised the Hungarian government and Prime Minister Gyula Horn for speaking out against them.

"The veneer of civilization is paper-thin and it is our job both in the public and the private sectors to make that veneer a bit more durable and strong," he told Reuters.

"Obviously, incidents of this kind need both an immediate and powerful public denunciation by those in positions of authority, but even more importantly a spontaneous revulsion of individual citizens against such outrages."

OPPOSE

joined the government. There is only one prime minister, just as there is only one commander in battle. I will go on because we want precisely the same things ... Don't any of you preach to me about ideological purity. There is no one more concerned than I about the people and the Land of Israel and Jerusalem."

Netanyahu contended that Shimon Peres and Yossi Beilin had promised Arafat a Palestinian state in 90 percent of the territories. But, he said, "I have new tidings for Peres. You can dream every night for the four years of our term, but you will wake up each morning to realize that there is no Palestinian state, contrary to your predictions. There really is a new Middle East, and in it there is not and never will be a Palestinian state."

Sharon suggested amendments in the Oslo Accords and argued that no government has the right to cede Jewish settlements. "You can replace ministers," he

quipped, alluding to Netanyahu's threats, "and governments can be replaced, but not so Hebron, the Temple Mount, Beit El, Shilo, and Rachel's Tomb."

He noted that the Americans have not forgotten, forgiven, or given up the hunt for terrorists who murdered Americans at Arafat's command. But Israel, he contended, has forgotten its victims. He noted that there is still no reciprocity in the dealings with Arafat, and that the Palestinian Covenant has not been amended. The PA offices in Jerusalem have not been closed, but relocated to Orient House, he said.

The audience was sure Begin was about to announce his resignation from the government and shouts of "No, Benny, no! Don't do it! Don't say it!" filled the auditorium when he rose to speak. He had to calm his listeners, then repeated his statement of a day earlier, attacking the meeting with Arafat as contradicting the government's guidelines.

Direct unequivocal criticism came only from Landau. He argued that the PA "did not live up to any of its undertakings, but instead of us showing them as the corrupt violators of the most basic human rights that they are and shifting the onus onto them by highlighting their breaches of the accords, we let Arafat dictate the agenda and concentrate on Hebron and on the concessions we are expected to make."

Outside the meeting, opposing groups of protesters milled around from the early afternoon, though the committee session began nearly two hours late. There were anti-government demonstrators from Molelet on the right and Meretz on the left. Inside, two uninvited guests put in an appearance. Molelet's Rehavam Ze'evi was warmly received, while the Peace Bloc's Uri Avnery was jeered and shoved, and finally had to be removed for his own safety.

The committee voted to postpone the party convention from April to June.

IRAQ

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher won an endorsement of the expanded no-fly zone from Britain yesterday, but after subsequent talks in Paris with French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette, he avoided questions on the subject.

Despite the anger in Baghdad at the US attacks and the expanded no-fly zone, Washington reported only two minor challenges on Wednesday to its air patrols over Iraq.

Meanwhile, Turkey staged heavy military movements near its border with Iraq, a day after officials said they are prepared to occupy a strip of northern Iraqi territory up to 10 km. deep to prevent cross-border attacks by guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a group fighting for the independence of Turkish Kurds.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said a thrust into northern Iraq is not imminent, but witnesses reported troop movements near the frontier and Turkish air patrols overhead.

Iraq had defended its attack on Irbil as necessary to prevent Iranian encroachment. It said the PUK was getting Iranian backing in its struggle for supremacy in the Kurdish area, which had been under Baghdad's control since Saddam's defeat in the 1991 Gulf war.

Despite both US and Iraqi assertions of no Iraqi army action in the northern region, PUK leader Jalal Talabani said in an interview in Sulaimaniya that he still faces a joint Iraqi-KDP offensive and would seek Iranian help if necessary.

"We will call support from any country which is ready to help us - from Iran, Syria, or Turkey," he said in his stronghold. "There is no possibility of peace now in this region."

CLASSIFIED

(Continued from Page 1) The army sent the documents to the battalion commander, Lt-Col. Y. in a brown Jerusalem Post envelope.

The letter was sent by registered mail on July 4 but was not claimed. A second notice was sent on August 8, but the letter still went unclaimed. The post office then delivered it to the return address, The Jerusalem Post, which was the only other address on the envelope. The only military marking on the envelope was an army postal stamp.

The envelope contained the address of the newspaper's old Tel Aviv office, from which it

moved in 1992. It is not clear how the army got hold of the envelope, or why it was reused.

The documents also mention three other reserve artillery battalions. Each battalion was ordered to a day of training that took place last month.

"I'm completely astonished. It's a serious foul-up on the army's part to have these sort of documents fall into the wrong hands," Y told The Jerusalem Post.

A representative from IDF Field Security was sent to collect the classified material, the IDF Spokesman said. The spokesman added that once the material was in army hands, the matter would be looked into.

PLOT

(Continued from Page 1) gers over a two-day period last year as they flew to the US from the Far East on American airlines.

He was identified in January 1995, after fire broke out in a Manila apartment that he shared with Murad. Yousef escaped from the apartment.

"They had the material; they had the know-how, and they had the determination to carry out the plan with deadly precision," prosecutor Dietrich Snell said in his summation.

Yousef's defense countered that he was the victim of a conspiracy by the Philippines and Pakistan aimed at winning the favor of the US government.

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IFA head: National team payout scandal is closed

ORI LEWIS

ACTION in the payout scandal which hit the national team will not be taken beyond the in-house inquiry, according to IFA Chairman Azrikam Milchan.

Milchan and his deputy, Gavri Levy, summoned team coaches Shlomo Scharf and Yitzhak Shum, team manager Avraham Bendori and captain Nir Klinger for a clarification of events which took place following Sunday's match, in which a then-anonymous donor awarded the players NIS 80,000 for beating Bulgaria.

The identity of the donor was subsequently revealed, his name being Roman Anisimov. Although there is no suspicion of any criminal actions by any of the parties involved, the transaction was thwarted by captain Klinger, who claims he knew nothing of the

goings on prior to an envelope full of cash being handed to him.

Milchan told Israel Radio last night that only coaches Scharf and Shum had prior knowledge of Anisimov's intentions and that he would be issuing a reprimand once the inquiry had been concluded.

"There is no question of any disciplinary action against anybody as there was no malicious intent," said Milchan.

The IFA intends to set up a three-man committee to review the code of ethics and make sure such actions are not repeated.

Coaches Scharf and Shum said that as far as they were concerned, the matter is closed and all their thoughts and efforts will now be directed at preparations for the World Cup qualifier with Russia at Ramat Gan on October 9.

Bet. Jerusalem-Hap. Haifa clash highlight of resuming soccer action

ORI LEWIS

THIS weekend's round of league action gets under way today in the wake of the national team's excellent win over Bulgaria on Sunday and the ensuing payout scandal.

Champions Maccabi Tel Aviv play against Hapoel Beersheba with a side which may include Gadi Brumer, who is said to have recovered from his foot injury which kept him out of Israel's victorious lineup. The match has been brought forward from tomorrow to allow Maccabi more time to recover and prepare for their UEFA Cup clash with Tenerife of Spain. The Tel Avivians leave for the Spanish Islands on Sunday for the first of their two-leg encounter against one of the strongest home teams in the Spanish League.

One of the most intriguing clashes of the weekend will be at Teddy Stadium where punters will have a chance to measure up two of the main challengers for Maccabi's title. Both teams will be at full strength for what should be a thrilling encounter.

Elsewhere, Maccabi Haifa entertains Hapoel Jerusalem, which will be very lucky to come away with a point from Kiryat Eliezer, while Hapoel Tiba will be without influential midfielder

Sahar Mizrahi for its home match with Hapoel Beit She'an in Netanya. Mizrahi was banned for six matches by an IFA disciplinary court after claiming that referee Haim Lipkowitz was a "racist" and "anti Arab" following Tiba's 3-1 loss to Ironi Rishon in its first league match of the season.

Mizrahi, who is Tiba's top Jewish player, still has some hope of having the decision changed, as he was absent at the court hearing. He will not be able to play tomorrow, however.

The Second Division also kicks into action tomorrow with a full round of fixtures.

This weekend's national League fixtures (all matches kick off at 16:30 unless otherwise stated):

Zafirim Holon v. Maccabi Herzliya, Holon, today; Maccabi Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Beersheba, National Stadium, today; Betar Jerusalem v. Hapoel Haifa, Teddy Stadium, tomorrow 17:45; Bnei Yehuda v. Maccabi Tel Aviv, Herta and Paul Amiria Stadium, tomorrow 18:00; Hapoel Beersheba v. Hapoel Tel She'an, Netanya, tomorrow; Hapoel Petah Tikva v. Ironi Rishon, Lezion, Petah Tikva, tomorrow 16:00; Maccabi Haifa v. Hapoel Jerusalem, Kiryat Eliezer, tomorrow 18:00; Hapoel Kfar Sava v. Hapoel Tel Aviv, Kfar Sava, today.

Chelsea saved by Wise move

LONDON (Reuter) - Chelsea's all-star collection of international talent was saved by a last-minute goal from Londoner Dennis Wise which salvaged a thrilling 3-3 draw with Arsenal in the Premier League on Wednesday.

Chelsea had looked set for a convincing win over its London rivals when Frank Leboeuf and Gianluca Vialli scored first-half goals, only for Arsenal to claim a 3-2 lead with 15 minutes to play through Ian Wright.

Just seconds remained when Wise, one of the few Englishmen in Chelsea's first-choice side under Raul Gullit, collected a lofted ball from John Spencer and crashed a left-foot shot past John Lukic, back in the Arsenal goal in place of David Seaman.

The result maintains Chelsea's unbeaten start to the season, but could not prevent Aston Villa appropos of the team into second place after a 1-0 win at Everton.

Poland wins volleyball tourney

HEATHER CHAIT

POLAND won the European Youth Volleyball Championships last night in Ra'anana, beating Italy 3-1 in the final.

Russia, one of the favorites before the tournament began, took third place, with a 3-0 win over Holland.

Greece came in fifth, beating Yugoslavia 3-0 and France upset

Belgium by the same score to end seventh.

At the lower end of the draw, Belarus beat Finland 3-2 for ninth place.

Israel, the host country, completed a winless passage in the championships by losing 3-1 to the Ukraine and settling for the twelfth, and last, spot in the tournament.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Ermitt says he's ready to play
Injured Dallas Cowboys running back Emmitt Smith threw away his neck brace Wednesday and declared himself ready to take on the New York Giants.

"I honestly feel like I can go," Smith said. "I'm still sore, but I think I'll be OK."

Butler's back
Barring the unforeseen, Brett Butler will be back in his customary leadoff role and in center field today before a capacity crowd at Dodger Stadium when the Los Angeles Dodgers open a 10-game homestand against the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Butler, who was treated for throat cancer, last played in a game on May 1 against the Colorado Rockies.

Babe Dahlgren dies at 84
Babe Dahlgren, the slick fielding first baseman who replaced Lou Gehrig with the New York Yankees on May 2, 1939, died Wednesday at his home of natural causes. He was 84.

Dahlgren spent 12 years in the major leagues with eight different teams, and played four positions.

He is best remembered as the man who took over for Gehrig, when his consecutive games played streak ended at 2,130 in Detroit in 1939.

England back in Five Nations
The Five Nations rugby union championship will go ahead as planned this season after England was readmitted to the competition yesterday, two months after being kicked out.

Officials from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales reached an agreement to keep England in a championship that dates back to 1909 and is the highlight of international rugby union in the northern hemisphere.

Two months ago, England was expelled by the other four nations for signing its own TV rights deal and only allowing Scotland, Ireland and Wales a small percentage of the revenues.

Graf's father's trial opens
Steffi Graf's father went on trial yesterday charged with evading taxes while managing the millions his daughter made playing tennis.

A former used-car salesman, Graf is accused of evading taxes on \$28 million of his daughter's income. He faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

Full team-by-team National Basketball League preview on Sunday

Agassi beats Muster in slugfest

NEW YORK (AP) - It was a bruising battle with firepower from both sides.

And when they finished rocketing forehands and hasting backhands, Andre Agassi was still standing, ready to fight again in the US Open semifinals.

Thomas Muster came out on the short end, 6-2, 7-5, 4-6, 6-2, Wednesday night.

"I am usually the one that is dominating the game, and he dominated me today," the third-seeded Muster admitted. "That is what he does very well on this surface."

Attempting to reach the men's singles title match for the third consecutive year, the sixth-seeded Agassi produced his finest tennis of the tournament. He had to.

In one of tomorrow's men's semifinals, Agassi will play second-seeded Michael Chang, who defeated Spain's Javier Sanchez 7-5, 6-3, 6-7 (2-7), 6-3 on Wednesday. The other semifinal pairings was to be completed late yesterday when top-seeded Pete Sampras played Alex Corretja and No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic went against two-time champion Stefan Edberg.



CLOSE QUARTERS - Andre Agassi knocks the ball back to Thomas Muster during their quarter-final US Open match Wednesday.

last month.

"He was playing inside the court and I was pushed back," Muster said.

Agassi agreed.

"Thomas likes to dictate play. If I dictate the play, he's not as comfortable on the defense," said Agassi, who won the U.S. Open two years ago, then lost in the final last year to Sampras.

This time, Agassi dictated nearly every point, mostly from the baseline. Each punished the ball, trying to see who could break the other's spirit first, always probing for a weakness.

It appeared Agassi would win in straight sets, but he lost his concentration in the third. Muster took advantage of the opening.

But a passing sprinkle stopped play for five minutes. Agassi took the time to refocus his game, breaking Muster's serve immediately after play resumed and going on to close out the match.

Like Agassi-Muster, the Chang-Sanchez match featured two players comfortable on the baseline. And both possess speed and quickness, qualities that created problems for the other.

After winning the second set, Chang went up two service breaks at 3-0 in the third. That's when Sanchez again found the winning touch, pulling even at 4-4 and finally capturing the set in a tiebreak.

There wasn't much to separate the two - Chang hit 50 winners, Sanchez 47 - except unforced

errors, where Chang had 33 and Sanchez 58.

The victory put Chang into the Open semis for the first time since 1992. The 1989 French Open champion at 17, Chang still is seeking his second Grand Slam title.

Hingsis played a sparkling all-court game to eliminate the net-charging Novotna. The Swiss youngster slugged winners from the baseline, showed touch in hitting drop volleys, and capped several points with winning overheads.

The victory was sparked by two runs - a 10-point surge from the first-set tiebreaker to love-40 in the second set's opening break, and an 11-point streak near the end of the second set that virtually clinched the match.

Yankees' Pettitte records 20th win

OAKLAND (AP) - Andy Pettitte became the American League's first 20-game winner in three seasons, and the Yankees' first in 11 years, as he pitched the New York Yankees to a 5-1 victory over the Oakland Athletics 10-3.

Pettitte (20-7) struck out six of the first seven batters he faced. The left-hander allowed three runs and seven hits, struck out seven and walked one in seven innings.

The previous 20-game winner in the AL was Jack McDowell, who

was 22-10 for the Chicago White Sox in 1993. John Smoltz is the only NL pitcher with 20 wins this season.

The last Yankee to reach 20 wins was Ron Guidry, who went 22-6 in 1985.

Paul O'Neill and Tino Martinez hit solo homers in the third for the Yankees, who got six doubles to finish their West Coast trip 4-6 after dropping the first four games.

Dave Telgheder (2-6) lasted just 2 1-3 innings for Oakland, allowing six runs and six hits.

AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
W	L	Pct.	GB	
New York	78	61	.561	-
Baltimore	74	65	.532	4
Boston	72	68	.514	6 1/2
Toronto	64	76	.457	14 1/2
Detroit	50	90	.357	28 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE				
East Division				
W	L	Pct.	GB	
Atlanta	84	55	.604	-
Montreal	76	62	.551	7 1/2
Florida	68	72	.486	16 1/2
New York	62	78	.443	22 1/2
Philadelphia	58	84	.400	28 1/2

WILD CARD RACE				
AMERICAN LEAGUE				
W	L	Pct.	GB	
Chicago	76	65	.539	-
Baltimore	74	65	.532	1
Seattle	72	67	.518	3
Boston	72	68	.514	3 1/2
Minnesota	70	70	.500	5 1/2

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הגדלה מן האלטר

Rad gets 3 years for contacting Iranian intelligence

EVELYN GORDON

HERZL Rad, who was convicted of contact with the Iranian intelligence services, was sentenced yesterday to three years in prison plus three years suspended.

By his own admission, Rad, 32, went to the Iranian Embassy in Turkey in 1995 and offered his services against Israel. He was taken to Iran, signed up, given a contact person, and promised \$10,000 if he successfully performed his assignments, including getting information from army bases.

Upon returning to Israel, Rad went to the Israel security services and told them the story. He was promptly arrested and charged with spying and assisting an enemy in time of war - charges which carry a sentence of death, or life in prison - but the charge was reduced to contact with a foreign agent as the result of a plea bargain, and the prosecution promised to ask for a maximum sentence of four years.

Jerusalem District Court Judges Ya'acov Zemah, Miriam Naor and Moussia Arad rejected Rad's claim that he was not influenced by the money, noting that he had been drifting from one odd job to another, and was not in good shape financially.

However, they accepted his statement that one of his motives was the hope that his recruitment by Iran would make him more attractive to Israel's intelligence



Herzl Rad is briefed yesterday by his lawyer, Zion Amir, in Jerusalem District Court.

service, which he wanted to join. "This accords with the evidence and with the defendant's character, as it emerged during the trial," the judges wrote. "It appears that the defendant's acts stemmed from a mixture of stupidity, instability, childish imagination and a desire to earn money. After hearing all the evidence, we are convinced that there was never any justification for charging him with crimes as serious as spying and aiding an enemy in time of war," they added. However, they continued, none

of this detracts from the severity of the crime. Rad fortunately had no valuable information to give the Iranians, but his willful contact with an enemy country could have caused real damage to state security, they said.

Rad's lawyer, Zion Amir, expressed satisfaction with the verdict. Rad and his family, however, were much less happy.

"I don't think someone who wanted to serve his country deserves a sentence like this," said his brother, Haim.

El Al to install advanced explosive-detector in US

MARILYN HENRY NEW YORK

EL Al will become the first airline in the US to install a sophisticated explosive-detection scanner, the company which manufactures the device said this week. The scanner will be used at El Al's Kennedy Airport site.

Three of the CTX 5000 scanners now are in use on a trial basis by Delta Air Lines in Atlanta and United in San Francisco.

The CTX 5000, manufactured by InVision Technologies, is the only device that has passed strict Federal Aviation Administration standards for explosive-detection. It can catch small amounts of explosives in luggage. Operating like a medical CAT scanner, the device produces a three-dimensional image of a suspicious item. Airport X-ray machines, on the other hand, produce a flat image of a shape and do not detect sophisticated non-metallic explosives, such as Semtex.

A Delta spokesman said the CTX 5000, used to screen baggage on international flights, has not increased passenger waits at airports.

The CTX 5000 sells for nearly \$1 million. InVision has said that, over the life of the scanner, the cost would be \$2 per passenger.

A-G accuses Ne'eman of fostering attacks on Barak

EVELYN GORDON and Itim

ATTORNEY-GENERAL Michael Ben-Yair indirectly accused former justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman yesterday of sowing the seeds for the recent attacks against Supreme Court President Aharon Barak.

"The discrediting of attacks against the prosecution are what sowed the seeds for the later attacks on the Supreme Court," Ben-Yair said at a ceremony welcoming Health Minister Tzahi Hanegbi as acting justice minister. "We cannot permit such phenomena in our society."

While Ben-Yair did not refer to Ne'eman by name, the context made it clear that he was referring to Ne'eman's charges that the Justice Ministry has an anti-religious bias.

Ben-Yair added that the rule of law and the legal system had been through "difficult times" recently, and said he was glad this trend had been reversed - a clear reference to Ne'eman's replacement by Hanegbi.

State Attorney Edna Arbel also alluded to Ne'eman without using his name, saying the recent "storm" had sent "shock waves" through the system, "and now we are hoping to enter a period of quiet and calm."

Hanegbi responded by saying that the "crisis" the legal system had recently passed through was over, and from now on, Justice Ministry employees would have the full backing of his minister. Hanegbi also denied that the government was considering replacing Ben-Yair.

Arbel, meanwhile, addressed these and other issues in an inter-

view published yesterday in the Israel Bar Association journal. Regarding the attacks on Barak, she stressed the importance of the Supreme Court in a democracy, but criticized the massive publicity given the alleged threats on Barak's life and his round-the-clock bodyguard.

"I would like to hope the protection given [Barak] does not necessarily stem from threats on his life," she told interviewer Gideon Allon of Ha'aretz. "I don't know what the reasons were for giving him this protection, and it is even less clear to me why the decision to give Justice Barak a bodyguard was publicized. I think the publicity was inappropriate. It could, God forbid, give people ideas."

She also stressed the need for a compromise on Rehov Bar-Ilan. "We have a divided society, and in my opinion, the authorities must strike an appropriate balance and compromise between the conflicting interests," she said.

"I don't know that agreeing to close Rehov Bar-Ilan for a few hours on Shabbat during prayer services constitutes giving in to violence... One cannot ignore the sensibilities of the religious community. In this case, the inconvenience that would be caused the secular community is such that we can live with it, in comparison to the injury desecration of Shabbat causes the religious community's sensibilities."

Arbel defended the license given the General Security Service to use physical force against suspects, though she stressed the need to ensure that this freedom is not abused.

"[One could say] the GSS must operate within the law, and every slight deviation mandates an indictment. But given the difficult reality in which we live, I think it would be hard to live with such an extreme approach," she said.

"But unlike in the past, today GSS agents are trained and warned, and there are clear instructions regarding the permitted and the forbidden," she added.

Regarding family violence and sex crimes, Arbel said she has changed her mind and now favors minimum sentences, since the ministry's proposed bill would still allow judges to ignore the minimum in exceptional circumstances.

She said she did not believe judges were blind to the issue of over-lenient sentencing, "but there are judges that follow Hillel and judges that follow Shammai. Each judges according to his own worldview, and therefore there are differences among judges."

WEATHER

Forecast: Hot and dry, humid on the coast. Shabbat: Cooler.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Cloud
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Berlin	11	16	cloudy
Buenos Aires	16	21	cloudy
Chicago	12	17	cloudy
Düsseldorf	10	15	cloudy
Frankfurt	11	16	cloudy
Hamburg	10	15	cloudy
London	11	16	cloudy
Madrid	14	19	cloudy
Moscow	10	15	cloudy
New York	11	16	cloudy
Paris	11	16	cloudy
Rome	14	19	cloudy
Stockholm	10	15	cloudy
Tokyo	11	16	cloudy
Warsaw	10	15	cloudy
Zurich	11	16	cloudy

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